FBIS DAILY REPORT

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ELECTIONS REPORTEDLY SET FOR 16 OCTOBER 1983

PY211527 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1133 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Cordoba, 21 Feb (DYN) -- The president of the Registration Board [Junta Promotora] of the Federal Party, Raul Pavone, said today that President Reynaldo Bignone, during a meeting held in the Olivos residence last week, stated that the general elections will be held on Sunday, 16 October 1983.

Pavone, who attended the meeting between General Bignone and leaders of the Federal Party last Friday, made this announcement during an interview over radio LW 1 of this city.

CLARIN REPORTS 'STATE OF ALERT' ON FALKLANDS

PY182247 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 18 Feb 83 p 7

[Text] Puerto Argentino (LATIN-REUTER) -- The British troops [stationed on the Falklands] are on a state of alert since yesterday in case there are harassing actions by Argentina. The sources stated that the [British] military command imposed the measure for fear that Argentina might attempt to thwart the festivities marking the 150th anniversary of British occupation. Every night, the fishing ships anchored in Puerto Argentino turn off their lights while bigger ships sail off to the high seas.

REPORTAGE ON VISIT OF PANAMANIAN VICE PRESIDENT

Activities Noted

PY181631 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1240 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Buenos Aires, 18 Feb (NA) -- Argentine President Reynaldo Bignone today decorated Panamanian Vice President Jorge Illueca with the Grand Cross of the Libertador General San Martin Order, after the Panamanian and Argentine foreign ministers had exchanged honors and after the reading of a joint declaration which reasserts the friendly ties uniting Latin American countries.

Illueca is carrying out a 5-day visit to Argentina in response to an invitation extended by the Argentine Government to express its gratitude to the Panamanian people for their support during the Malvinas war.

In turn, the Panamanian vice president decorated General Bignone with the "Extraordinary Grand Cross of the Order of Vasco Nunez de Balboa."

The Argentine-Panamanian Joint Commission, which this morning ended its studies on bilateral trade relations, issued a joint declaration in this regard.

The declaration reasserts the friendly ties uniting the two countries and Argentina's sovereign rights over the Malvinas. It also notes the importance of promoting trade and cultural exchange between the two countries.

The Panamanian vice president is scheduled to hold a press conference this afternoon, while tomorrow he will travel to Cruz del Eje, Cordoba, where he will attend a ceremony in honor of the late president Illia.

A reliable source reported yesterday that Argentina will reportedly support Jorge Illueca's candidacy for the presidency of the 38th UN General Assembly, which is to be held in New York in September.

The bilateral trade agreements signed today include the opening of a line of credit to Panama for the purchase of Argentine manufactured products.

Argentine Foreign Minister Juan Ramon Aguirre Lanari described Vice President Jorge Illueca as "a courageous and just defender of Latin American unity."

During a luncheon he held yesterday in honor of the Panamanian vice president, who carried out his second day of his official 5-day visit to Argentina, Foreign Minister Aguirre Lanari said that Illueca "was the only one who raised his voice in defense of Argentina's rights over the Malvinas, at the Security Council meeting."

Illueca thanked his Argentine colleague for his statement, and he reasserted Panama's support "for the just right that Argentina has over the South Atlantic Islands, where the colonialist presence of the British is an insult to all Latin American nations."

Departure Statement Carried

PY220103 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1300 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (DYN) -- Panamanian Vice President Jorge Illueca said that he is in favor of "military security cooperation" among the Latin American armies, and noted the ineffectiveness of the Inter-American Reciprocal Assistance Treaty (TIAR) "which the United States did not respect." Illueca made these declarations at Ezeiza airport just before returning to Panama after an official visit to our country.

The Panamanian official argued against the presence of Great Britain on the Malvinas and expressed his solidarity with the Argentine opposition to the installation of a nuclear military base there.

Illueca noted that such a base would pose a serious danger for all Latin America and he urged the military of the region to jointly form "their own security system."

As for the Argentine charges that the UK is installing a nuclear military base on the Malvinas, the Panamanian vice president said that "the charges are well-founded and Panama has already made similar charges both to the UN Security Council and to the UN General Assembly."

He added: "It is unacceptable for an extracontinental power to attempt to maintain a nuclear military base on Argentine insular territory, because this Argentine sovereign territory has been usurped through an act of piracy."

Illueca said that with its attitude, Great Britain violates principles which must be respected not only by Latin America but by the international community as well. In this regard, he said that one of the objectives of the nonaligned countries' meeting in New Delhi should be to stress "that the colonialist cancer must be erradicated from the Malvinas and that measures be taken to prevent completion of the installation of the nuclear military base there because this is a danger not only for Argentina but for all Latin America."

He noted that the TIAR "proved ineffective" because it was not respected by the United States, and called upon "our countries to turn their sights back to the time of our independence and consider the necessity of having an army of the Andes, a united liberation army, so that the Latin American armies may create their own security system."

Illueca then said that a peaceful solution to the Malvinas problem is expected "within a reasonable time," and added that "Latin America, the Latin Americans and the Latin American servicemen whose duty is to defend our institutions and our territorial integrity should agree that we can no longer depend on the TIAR and the European Economic Community (EEC), but that we must depend on our own resources, which are sufficient although they are sometimes in foreign hands."

The Panamanian vice president said that these resources "should be put to work for the purpose of security." He added that Latin American armies "must unite."

He also said that "after the South Atlantic incident, I am convinced that we must be strong and this can be achieved through economic and military security cooperation."

About the usefulness of international organizations, he said that "the tragedy is that both the inter-American and the UN systems are in a state of crisis because the great powers lack the political will to solve the existing problems. What happened in the Malvinas has made us aware of this."

He noted the ineffectiveness of international and regional organizations to safeguard international security.

He added: "This compells us to achieve the unity of Latin America and this is why the Malvinas issue has meant the opening of horizons for a new Argentina and for a new Latin America."

(?Asked by journalists) about the participation of U.S. advisors in El Salvador, he answered that "the Central American problem cannot be resolved through a military solution. It will only be achieved through political negotiations."

Illueca noted that Panama has promoted the search for "Latin American solutions for Latin American problems" regarding the Central American issue as well as other Latin American conflicts.

He noted: We believe that "any military assistance, wherever it may come from -- either from the United States, the Soviet Union or any other country of this hemisphere -- is unacceptable and that it is a disturbing factor in the life of Latin America."

He advocated the neutrality of the Panama canal so that it may not be used for aggressions and added that priority for British ships in the canal had been opposed "since the present procedure establishes that they wait their turn."

Illueca noted that there was an incident yesterday in Panama "because the United States has been trying to establish contacts without going through Foreign Ministry channels."

He added that Panamian Army officers have been contacted "and this has been the cause of a protest and a rejection of foreign interference, because we want to live as a genuinely independent nation. And although we want to continue having friendly relations we cannot tolerate any abuses or interference."

Joint Communique Issued

PY212246 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish 1602 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Buenos Aires, 21 Feb (TELAM) -- Argentina and Panama have reaffirmed that the massive military and naval presence and the activities of Great Britain in the area of the Malvinas, South Georgia and South Sandwich Islands constitute a serious concern to all Latin American countries and undermine stability in the region.

The Argentine-Panamanian press communique released this morning by San Martin Palace at the end of the visit of Panamanian Vice President Jorge Illueca expresses the deep concern over the reported presence of nuclear weapons in the British fleet sent to the South Atlantic in April 1982, indicating that it involved the violation by the United Kingdom of contracted commitments and of principles of international coexistence.

Illueca confirmed his recognition of Argentine sovereign rights over the islands and his support for a quick solution through negotiations, with the assistance of the UN secretary general.

On this subject, the communique notes the gratitude expressed by President Bignone to Dr Illueca for the resolute and firm efforts carried out in solidarity by Panama in all international forums defending Argentine rights over the Southern Archipelago, and especially for Illueca's personal efforts, which have been inspired and are in keeping with the ideas of the founders of our fatherland.

On the occasion, both Bignone and Illueca stressed the need to foster and strengthen the different initiatives aimed at achieving a durable peace in Central America through dialogue and political understanding with the participation of all states in the area.

The communique adds that the Argentine president has confirmed his country's solidarity with the people and government of Panama and advocated the total fulfillment of the Torrijos-Carter treaties, especially regarding the establishment of a single nondiscriminatory salary scale.

Panamanian Foreign Minister Juan Jose Amado reiterated during the talks held here his country's firm position on the strict fulfillment of the Panama Canal neutrality policy so that this inter-oceanic waterway may not be used for aggressive purposes against the brotherly Latin American countries, thus preventing the repetition of situations which took place during the conflict in the South Atlantic.

Argentine Foreign Minister Juan Aguirre Lanari expressed his gratitude for these remarks and added that the Argentine Republic adheres to the protocol referring to the permanent neutrality and operation of the Panama Canal.

Through Aguirre Lanari, our country has committed its support for the candidacy of Panama for the presidency of the 38th UN General Assembly.

The two foreign ministers have stressed the great importance of the 5th ministerial meeting of the Group of 77, which will be held in Beunos Aires between 28 March and 9 April 1983, because in this meeting the member countries will establish their position regarding the important effects of international economic relations.

They also expressed hope for the success of the seventh nonaligned summit conference to take place in New Delhi, India, between 7 and 11 March 1983.

They also agreed to stress the role to be developed by the Latin American Economic System (SELA) as a suitable organization to promote Latin American cooperation, consultation and coordination. They also confirmed SELA's importance in counteracting the implementation of coercive economic measures, which go against the rules and procedures of international law, adopted by third countries against any SELA member country.

During the talks the importance of the decisions adopted within SELA in August 1982 regarding the regional economic security was also stressed. On the occasion the Argentine foreign minister expressed Argentine support to Panama for the complete fulfillment of the Panama Canal treaties.

The joint desire to intensify relations in all sectors was also confirmed, and Illueca concluded by inviting President Bignone and Foreign Minister Aguirre Lanari to visit Panama as official guests at the most appropriate date.

ECONOMY MINISTER RETURNS AFTER U.S. VISIT

PY220000 Buenos Aires Domestic Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Excerpt] At the end of a 12-day official visit to the United States, Economy Minister Jorge Wehbe has returned to our country.

During his stay in the United States, Wehbe met with IMF officials, U.S. bankers and representatives of the U.S. private sector.

Foreign Debt Total Clarified

PY181408 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1023 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Buenos Aires, 18 Feb (DYN) -- Economy Minister Jorge Wehbe has admitted that "there was an error" in the estimates of the Argentine foreign debt. The real amount totals $37 billion instead of the $43 billion reported by the economy minister himself before leaving for the United States.

The minister's confirmation of the correct amount of the foreign debt took place only 24 hours after the release of a communique by the Air Force stating that according to research made by the Air Force, the debt amounts to $37.8 billion.

In December 1983, Wehbe said that the debt amounted to $43 billion, and recent unofficial estimates have increased it to $45 billion.

Asked yesterday about the exact amount of the foreign debt, the economy minister stated that "there was an error in the final count of the different figures, attributed perhaps to the fact that the amount corresponding to the exchange insurance was added twice, so that we can safely say that our country's foreign debt amount to approximately $37 billion. We estimate that by the end of the year it will increase to approximately $37.8 billion."

DELEGATE DENIES ACCEPTANCE OF PAPAL PROPOSAL

PY191917 Buenos Aires DYN in Spanish 1303 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Buenos Aires, 19 Feb (DYN) -- Ricardo Ercheverry Boneo, deputy general to the papal mediation, said today that the news report saying that the military junta has accepted John Paul II's proposal regarding the Beagle issue "is inaccurate." The report had been given by an Italian news agency quoting sources close to the Argentine delegation.

OPPOSITION MEMBERS REPORTEDLY PREPARE COUP

PY220252 Paris AFP in Spanish 0041 GMT 22 Feb 83

[Text] La Paz, 21 Feb (AFP) -- The afternoon newspaper JORNADA reported here today that civilians and military officers opposed to President Hernan Siles Zuazo's government have met during the past few days to prepare a coup d'etat.

According to this report, these opposition members will reportedly try to use as pretext the serious economic difficulties which the democratic regime is facing, in addition to the climate of social unrest to demands for salary readjustments by labor sectors. This problem, JORNADA states, becomes even more serious because Bolivia has not yet received any significant economic aid from abroad, with which the government could have minimized its domestic difficulties.

PRESIDENT SILES CANCELS NEW DELHI TRIP

PY182341 Paris AFP in Spanish 2026 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] La Paz, 18 Feb (AFP) -- President Hernan Siles Zuazo has decided not to travel to New Delhi early next month to attend the summit meeting of heads of state and foreign ministers of the Nonaligned Movement.

Foreign Minister Mario Valverde, who revealed the president's decision, will represent Bolivia in that meeting. The heavy administrative commitments and the difficult economic situation determined the suspension of President Siles Zuazo's trip. The president had also been planning to travel to France and Spain at the invitation of President Francois Mitterrand and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez.

FOREIGN MINISTER TO ATTEND ANDEAN MEETING

PY181313 Paris AFP in Spanish 2048 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Excerpt] La Paz, 17 Feb (AFP) -- Franklin Anaya, Foreign Ministry under secretary general, reported today that Bolivian Foreign Minister Mario Velarde Derado will participate in the meeting of Andean foreign ministers to take place in Bogota between 24 and 25 February. A high-ranking Bolivian Foreign Ministry official left today for Bogota to pave the way for the meeting. The Andean foreign ministers will study several subjects of political interest on the future of Andrean integration.

ECONOMIC TEAM EVALUATING 'SECOND STAGE' MEASURES

PY181435 La Paz Cadena Panamericana in Spanish 1200 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Excerpt] The planning and coordination minister and the finance minister, Arturo Nunez del Prado and Flavio Machicado, respectively, have said that before implementing any [economic] measures, the UDP [Democratic and Popular Unity] government will discuss them with the labor and business sectors. They added that these meetings will start tomorrow since the regime does not want to take the people by surprise with these measures as happened during dictatorships. They also said that it will be President Siles Zuazo who will choose the measures to be implemented from the different options that will be submitted to him. They added that it will be the president who will decide what the economic corrective measures will be implemented to start the second stage of the national economic policy, since the 100 day truce has ended.

The finance minister said that the economic team believes that it is necessary to establish an economic policy that is in keeping with national needs and the expectations of the people. Asked about the devaluation that has been reported by the media, Machicado said: I cannot say that there will not be a devaluation. In economy and social phenomena, no one can say this or that will or will not happen.

The finance minister, who is believed to be an independent within the economic team, said that there are five stages in the new economic policy. The first stage has already concluded. He noted that the goal of this stage was to evaluate those measures adopted in November.

The second stage concerns the evaluation of the effect of economic measures in the future, which encompasses a study of the fiscal, monetary and foreign debt situation. The third stage consists in consulting political sectors and other national opinion sectors.

NICARAGUANS DENY VERACITY OF SIC REPORT

PY190005 La Paz EL DIARIO in Spanish 12 Feb 83 p 5

[Text] In view of ill-intentioned reports disseminated by the media about a newsletter from the Confidential Information Service, SIC, which in its issue No 733 dated 12 February [as published] carried a report made by a European intelligence service referring to "actions by Sandinists groups all over South America" and to the fact that "a paramilitary training camp headed by Nicaraguans would presumably be operating at Rinconada, Bolivia," the Nicaraguan Embassy in Bolivia hereby reports the following to the people and the government of Bolivia:

1. Through a communique released in December 1982, we emphatically denied "statements" made by an Italian individual to the effect that Nicaraguan advisers were staying at the Gloria Hotel in La Paz." The people and the government of Bolivia have had a chance to prove that the report was false.

2. We feel again compelled to deny the statements included in the "SIC" newsletter because they are absolutely false and absurd. We hereby ask all those persons who are interested in this issue to find out whether we are telling the truth.

3. We know that Latin America is in the heart of the Nicaraguan revolution and that the Nicaraguan revolution is in the heart of Latin America. However, this does not mean that we are exporting our revolution. It is enough for us to show the world the example of bravery, courage and resoluteness of our people. Nicaragua cannot avoid doing this.

4. Nicaragua firmly and resolutely rejects the SIC report, noting that the report has to do with U.S. imperialism's attempts to isolate and attack our country.

5. Nicaragua reasserts its absolute respect for the principles of sovereignty and self-determination of the peoples and of nonintervention in the domestic affairs of other nations. At the same time, Nicaragua reasserts its policy of peace with and mutual respect for all countries in the world.

The Nicaraguan Embassy takes this opportunity to greet the Bolivian people and their democratic government.

La Paz, 9 February 1983, Nicaraguan Embassy.

FOREIGN MINISTRY COMMUNIQUE ON SEA OUTLET

PY182258 La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 13 Feb 83 p 5

[Text] The Bolivian foreign minister has reiterated the Bolivian Government's "unwavering will" to seek out a solution to the maritime problem by resorting to "all possible political and diplomatic actions both at the bilateral and multilateral levels."

A declaration issued on the occasion of the 104th anniversary of Antofagasta's invasion by Chilean troops, stressed the significant progress achieved in the quest for international solidarity toward Bolivia's maritime claim.

The anniversary is commemorated on 14 February and the official declaration stated:

The Bolivian Ministry of Foreign Relations and Worship on the occasion of the anniversary of the invasion of Litoral Department wishes to reaffirm to the Bolivian people and the international community the unwavering will of the constitutional government of Bolivia to carry out all possible political and diplomatic actions at both the bilateral and multilateral levels, in order to put an end to the landlocked situation of the country resulting from the abovementioned act of aggression.

It will continue, with renewed energy, to promote the cause of Bolivia before the international organizations so as to strenghten and expand the firm support of the international community obtained at the latest OAS Assembly when it was stressed that "finding a fair solution which would allow Bolivia to gain a sovereign and useful outlet on the Pacific Ocean is of permanent interest to the hemisphere."

At the meeting in Managua, the Nonaligned Movement reiterated its staunch support for Bolivia's inalienable right to obtain a direct, useful and sovereign outlet to the Pacific Ocean.

Hernan Siles Zuazo, constitutional president of the nation, has properly interpreted the extent of international solidarity toward our country when he stated to the UN General Assembly that "Bolivia has not given up, nor will it ever give up its quest for a free, sovereign and useful outlet to the Pacific. It is a national cause. It is also a continental cause. One day it will also become a cause of the international community until justice prevails."

Drawing strength from national consensus regarding the maritime cause and with its prestige increased by the democratic status of the national institutions, the Bolivian Foreign Ministry will persevere in this direction.

BRIEFS

NEW BRAZILIAN AMBASSADOR -- Joao Tabajara de Oliveira yesterday presented his credentials to President Siles Zuzao as the new Brazilian ambassador to Bolivia. [La Paz PRESENCIA in Spanish 10 Feb 83 p 10 PY]

NEW INDUSTRY UNDER SECRETARY -- Daniel Quevedo Villagomez was installed yesterday as the new commerce under secretary at the Industry and Commerce Ministry. [La Paz EL DIARIO in Spanish 9 Feb 83 p 3 PY]

PERICAS LAUDS SHULTZ' REMARKS AT U.S. SENATE

PY190217 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 18 Feb 83 p 5

[Excerpt] Brasilia -- Itamaraty spokesman Bernardo Pericas has lauded the remarks made by U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz at the U.S. Senate, where he advocated measures designed to rescue developing countries from the crises they have been enduring. Pericas said Shultz's speech "appeared to be very interesting and revealed political receptiveness to the serious international financial and economic situation."

Pericas said Shultz's speech was "in keeping with the Reagan administration's growing awareness of this problem" Pericas noted that "In the United States some are already speaking of a new international economic order," an idea which is strongly supported by Brazil.

30 PERCENT MAXIDEVALUATION OF CRUZEIRO DECREED

PY190250 Porto Alegre Radio Guaiba in Portuguese 0200 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] The Central Bank announced tonight a 30 percent maxidevaluation of the cruzeiro against the dollar beginning next Monday. The dollar will now be purchased for 379.54 cruzeiros and sell for 381.44 cruzeiros.

The devaluation of the cruzeiro this year amounts to 59.65 percent, and the 12-month cumulative devaluation of 174.31 percent.

Finance Minister Ernane Galveas and Planning Minister Delfim Netto were charged with justifying this maxidevaluation. According to them, the measure is dictated by the unpostponable need to accelerate the process of adjusting Brazil's balance of payments in view of the adverse situation of the international market. The 30-percent devaluation represents to a large degree an advance of the minidevaluations which were programmed for this year on the bases of a monthly average increase of 1 percent above the general price index.

For the two ministers of the economic area, this maxidevaluation is an important step to stimulate the competitiveness of Brazilian products on the international market. The two ministers contend that, in addition to increased exports in the wake of this maxidevaluation of the cruzeiro there will be a greater protection for national industry and that this protection will also reflect on the level of employment in the country.

Another positive effect of this maxidevaluation, in the opinion of the two ministers, is that the measure eliminates the monthly foreign exchange readjustments above inflation rates, and increases the interest rates on foreign currency loans, thus preventing expectations of high domestic interest rates.

Galveas Explains Move

PY220114 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] In an interview granted to the GLOBO television network for the program "Good Morning, Brazil," Finance Minister Erane Galveas stated today that the government's decision to adopt the maxidevaluation of the cruzeiro was necessary due to the aggravation of the international markets, which have adversely affected both the commercial and the financial sector.

According to Galveas, the understandings with the IMF establish that Brazil would export at least $23 billion worth of goods and would import $17 billion, in order to obtain a surplus of $6 billion. Attaining this surplus, according to Galveas, could have been seriously affected by predictions that markets such as Argentina, Chile, Uruguay, Mexico and Venezuela, will not show any significant improvement as far as imports of Brazilian products is concerned.

This verification, the minister explained, forced the government to decide on the maxi-devaluation of the cruzeiro as a way to accelerate the process of readjusting the balance of payments.

FIGUEIREDO PLANNING VISIT TO BOLIVIA, GUYANA

PY181633 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 17 Feb 83 p 4

[Text] In addition to the trips that he will make to Mexico, in April, and to Japan, in September, the president will also visit Bolivia this year to express support for the democratic opening process being implemented in Bolivia since Hernan Siles Zuazo assumed power through free and direct elections.

Although the president follows the Foreign Ministry's policy of not interfering in the domestic affairs of neighboring countries, it is very unlikely that President Figueiredo will visit Uruguay this year, where exceptional measures are in force, or Ecuador (in this case in view of the lack of available data). These are the only two Latin American countries (in addition to Bolivia) that Figueiredo has not yet visited.

Figueiredo is also studying the possibility of visiting the Guyanas, but Itamaraty has advised against this idea in view of the unstable situation of the governments that recently assumed power in those countries. This is particularly the case of Suriname, where there have been a series of coups d'etat.

PLANALTO STATES POSITION ON SILES ZUAZO VISIT

PY190151 Rio de Janeiro O GLOBO in Portuguese 18 Feb 83 p 2

[Excerpts] Brasilia (O GLOBO) -- If Bolivian President Siles Zuazo decides to come to Brazil to attend the inauguration of Leonel Brizola as Rio de Janeiro governor, his visit "will not be considered an official visit to the country," Planalto Palace spokesman Carlos Atila said yesterday.

Atila said this would be a completely normal treatment without any political overtone and noted that even in this case Itamaraty would put a diplomat at the service of the visitor, who might even dispense with this courtesy.

Siles Zuazo's presence at Brizola's inauguration, Atila said, "will not create any problem, particularly because any chief of state or foreign official is always welcome in Brazil."

SURINAMESE MINISTER TO EXPLAIN NATION'S POLICY

PY211345 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 20 Feb 83 p 6

[Text] Brasilia -- Suriname's Foreign Minister Harvey Naarendorp will arrive tomorrow in Brasilia for a 2-day official visit during which he will try to convince Brazilian Govenrment officials that his country must neither be accused of being "pro-Cuba" nor of promoting "subversion in the continent." Naarendorp is a minister in the government of Colonel Deysi Bouterse, a former sergeant who took over the government of Suriname in a coup in February 1980.

During the last 2 years, relations between Paramaribo and Washington have been deteriorating, and late last year the latter denounced the Surinamese Government's links with Havana.

In a diplomatic counteroffensive, Naarendorp told the Americans that not only relations with Cuba but also with Brazil and Mexico are "priority" for Suriname. To prove this claim, he then decided to come to Brasilia to explain his government's political objectives.

During his 2-day visit in Brasilia, the Surinamese foreign minister will talk with Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro, and will be received by President Figueiredo in the Planalto Palace.

Guerreiro Receives Naarendorp

PY220107 Brasilia Domestic Service in Portuguese 2200 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Foreign Minister Saraiva Guerreiro received this morning Suriname's Foreign Minister Harvey Harold Naarendorp, who came to Brazil on an official visit to discuss the possibility of obtaining aid for the implementation of development projects in his country.

The foreign minister of Suriname denied rumors that the Suriname Government intends to ally itself with the socialist bloc.

BRIEFS

STEEL SALES TO U.S. -- Brasilia -- The National Monetary Council decided yesterday to impose a tax on sales of steel tubes, sheets and cables among other products, earmarked for the United States to avoid the adoption of surtaxes by the U.S. Government, according to Resolution 798 published by the Central Bank. The resolution establishes that the sales of common steel tubes or iron tubes earmarked for the United States will experience a price increase of 13.3 percent, while iron or steel sheets will have an increase between 12.16 and 12.53 percent, and carbon steel wire rods will have an increase from 14.9 to 15.4 percent. [Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 11 Feb 83 p 16 PY]

TRADE BALANCE SURPLUS -- The trade balance showed a surplus of $155 million in January, thanks to a drop of 14.4 percent in imports and a drop of only 4.7 percent in exports. The country has sold goods worth $1,569,000,000 and imported goods amounting to $1,414,000. According to Acting Finance Minister Carlos Viacava, the result is modest considering the goal of a $6 billion surplus by the end of the year. And the most important individual export operation was carried out on Sunday with the sales of 50,000 Passat vehicles to Iraq, a contract which represents $300 million. [Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 8 Feb 83 p 1 PY]

INFLATION BREAKS RECORD -- The 9 percent inflation rate recorded in January was the highest since 1947 when the country began recording monthly increases. With this new increase, the inflation accrued during the past 12 months has reached 104.9 percent. [Rio de Janeiro JORNAL DO BRASIL in Portuguese 4 Feb 83 p 1 PY]

MENINGITIS OUTBREAK -- A new type of meningitis, probably viral, is worrying the people of Campinas, Rio Claro, Piracicaba and Jundiai, the cities most seriously affected by the outbreak, which began in November 1982. There have been 587 cases during the past 3 months alone, an average of three per day. [Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 10 Feb 83 p 14 PY]

REPORT ON PINOCHET ACTIVITIES, REMARKS

PY181431 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Relay from Osorno by (Graciela Contreras)]

[Excerpts] In his 4th day of a tour through the 10th region, President Pinochet said yesterday that no one will stop us, because whoever tries to will be trying to obstruct the will of the people. Among other things, the president also disclosed that he had decided to authorize union leader Carlos Podlech, who had been expelled from the country in December 1982, to return.

During a press conference held in Osorno, the agriculture minister said in this regard that the main reason why Podlech was allowed to return to Chile, was because of his attitude while abroad. During that time, the union leader was loyal to the principles of the government.

In Osorno, the president said that the economic crisis the country is experiencing is being overcome successfully. He noted that opportunists tried to take advantage of this weakness to return to power.

During a luncheon, President Pinochet noted that 11 September will not be repeated, and he urged the population to continue working to achieve progress. In Rio Bueno, the president said: We cannot return to politicking and demagogy. We cannot return to the old system.

CARVAJAL NOTES BETTER DEFENSE CONDITIONS

PY181428 Santiago Domestic Service in Spanish 1000 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Defense Minister Patricio Carvajal has noted that today Chile is in better shape concerning defense matters than 5 years ago. However, the defense minister discarded the possibility that his statement may cause suspicion in other nations. Moreover, he said that there should not be any fears at the domestic level that the defense budget will undermine the development of the nation.

Minister Patricio Carvajal said that Chile spends less money than those nations with offensive plans, since it does not need excessive resources, elements, or personnel.

HAVANA CITES COMPLAINTS AGAINST REGIME

PA181636 Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] The Commission for the Rights of Youth in Valparaiso, Chile, has reported that one of its leaders, (Jorge Maturana), who was arrested on 31 January 1983, has been tortured in a secret jail used by the Chilean fascist regime's political police.

(Maturana) appeared in court after the Valparaiso Court of Appeals accepted an injunction in his favor. This is the first time in years that this has happened in Chile.

Meanwhile, the Socialist Party of Chile has urged the international community to launch a campaign to save the life of (Andres Gualmatis), a socialist party leader arrested by the Chilean police.

In a communique issued in Caracas, Venezuela, the Socialist Party of Chile expressed its concern about the life of (Gualmatis), whose whereabouts are unknown. (Gualmatis) was wounded and then arrested by the Chilean police on 8 January 1983.

MILITARY PERSONNEL IN MAS FACE PROSECUTION

PA181255 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0222 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Medellin, Colombia, 17 Feb (EFE) -- Sixty military men who are either directly or indirectly connected with the Colombian Armed Forces will be taken to court on charges of complicity with the clandestine group "Death to Kidnappers" (MAS), according to a report published today by the local newspaper EL MUNDO.

According to EL MUNDO, the 60 men who are linked to the Armed Forces took part in MAS actions in Medellin, Cimitarra, La Dorada, Puerto Boyaca, Puerto Triunfo, Puerto Berrio and towns in Arauca. The people linked to the clandestine organization (into which President Belisario Betancur has ordered an investigation) include only military and paramilitary personnel; the number would increase were civilians to be included. According to the attorney general's office, civilians "have also had no trouble in finding agents to engage in repressive activities at their wish."

The identities of the military men who are accused of participating in one way or another in the MAS' activities have kept a strict secret. On 4 February, Attorney General Carlos Jimenes Gomez sent President Betancur a report on the investigations, but the military commands denied that their members were connected with the criminal organization. A few days later Defense Minister Gen Fernando Landazabal Reyes asked the attorney general for the list of military men who are allegedly linked to the MAS.

M-19 TO HOLD NATIONAL CONVENTION 19 MAR

PA211730 Bogota EL SIGLO in Spanish 10 Feb 83 p 2

[Text] Bogota, 9 Feb (CIEP) -- The 19 April Movement (M-19) has reiterated its intention to become a political group and to participate in the 1984 elections. It has announced that it will hold its national convention on 19 March in the city of Bucaramanga. The convention, which will be chaired by former congressman Carlos Toledo Plata and by Andres Almarales Manga, will be aimed at establishing the political strategies that will bring the best results in the departmental assembly and municipal council elections.

The M-19 wants all the delegates from the country's various regions to attend this convetion. It wants to decide on the trips that will be made "to insist on the transformation of the country and on protection for the poor." A second convention, similar to the March one, reportedly will take place in the city of Cali; however, the date and the details for this convention won't be made known until the Bucaramanga convention.

Reintegration

In addition to politics, which will be a key issue at the national convention, the participants will decide on the language of the request that 18 M-19 members who lost their jobs because of their links to subversive activities be rehired since, with their acceptance of the amnesty, it is believed they have the right to return to their jobs. Although the names of the 18 former public employees have not been announced, spokesmen for the M-19 political command have said that these persons were involved with various state enterprises and were dismissed once their links with the movement were established. The M-19 is of the opinion that if these persons have accepted the benefits of Law 35 of 1982 and the guarantees that the government has offered, they have the right to request to be reemployed. The sources say that most of those dismissed were either teachers or employees of the national telecommunications enterprise.

CEPE MANAGER VIEWS OIL PRICE REDUCTION PRESSURE

PA190001 Quito Cadena Ecuador Radio in Spanish 2300 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] The decrease in the price of North Sea oil approved today by Great Britain was foreseen, said Raul Jaramillo, general manager of the Ecuadorean State Oil Corporation, CEPE, today. However, he added that we trust that this will not cause a reduction of the benchmark price of $34 per barrel of light Arabian oil because this would result in a real debacle and cause a virtual price war.

He said that Ecuadorean crude is still withstanding tremendous pressure for a price decrease, which CEPE and the government are trying to resist.

Finally, he said he had no knowledge of an immediate extraordinary OPEC meeting to analyze the international oil market situation.

GOVERNMENT, IMF TO DISCUSS ECONOMIC PLAN

PA181532 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1130 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Despite opposition from various sectors, the government had decided to take over the private sector's debt. The government has decided to refinance the private sector's foreign debt to stabilize the credit system and to prevent an increase in unemployment and greater problems to the country's banking and financial systems. In announcing this, the Central Bank manager said that the private sector foreign debt that is subject to refinancing will be that which is registered at the Central Bank.

The government has also begun to discuss its economic stabilization plan with an IMF mission that recently arrived in the country. Finance Minister Pedro Pinto, has said that he was awaiting the arrival of this delegation to adjust the plan prepared by Ecuadorean economists. In broad terms, the plan involves a radical modification of the exchange system, including an eventual currency devaluation.

GOVERNMENT MINISTER TO ATTEND NONALIGNED SUMMIT

PA202318 Quito Voz de los Andes in Spanish 1230 GMT 20 Feb 83

[Text] Ecuadorean President Oswaldo Hurtado has appointed Government Minister Galo Garcia Feraud as his personal representative to the New Delhi Nonaligned Movement summit in mid-March. President Hurtado declined to attend this meeting after he received a personal invitation through the Indian ambassador to our country.

Various subjects dealing with North-South and East-West relations and especially the position of the developing countries in the face of the international economic crisis will be discussed at this meeting.

It is not known whether Ecuadorean Foreign Minister Luis Valencia Rodriguez will attend the foreign minister's meeting that will be held prior to the summit meeting.

GUERRILLA ACTIVITY IN AYACUCHO AREA REPORTED

AFP Reports Incidents

PY172031 Paris AFP in Spanish 0309 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Lima, 16 Feb (AFP) -- According to reports received by AFP from Ayacucho, in the southeastern Andean region of Peru, at least five guerrillas from the extremist organization Shining Path died today in clashes with government forces around Ayacucho.

One of the armed confrontations took place in Huancapi, Victor Fajardo Province, some 70 km south of Ayacucho. Two persons died there, a man and a woman. Other confrontations took place in Unaro and Huancaruma, in the same province, with a total of three extremists dead. Another clash took place in Andahuaylas Province, east of Ayacucho, with an undetermined number of casualties.

Moreover, approximately 100 soldiers and policemen left today for Cangallo Province southeast of Ayacucho, to participate in the chase of approximately 70 guerrillas who attacked and set fire to the towns of Huanbalpa and Huamanmarca. These extremists are retreating toward the Pampas River, it was said.

80 Guerrillas Reportedly Killed

PY220203 Paris AFP in Spanish 1520 GMT 20 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Lima, 20 Feb (AFP) -- Approximately 80 Shining Path guerrillas and 20 peasants -- who were supporting security forces -- died in clashes with security forces in the strife-torn Department of Ayacucho, in southeastern Peru. Correspondents of Lima newspapers have reported that the clashes, the fiercest since Shining Path began its subversive actions 2 and 1/2 years ago, occurred in the northern and southern parts of the department between last Thursday and Saturday.

Approximately 40 guerrillas reportedly died in Huanta Province, approximately 80 km north of Ayacucho, during bloody clashes that took place all day long yesterday. The sources reported that peasants from Huayllay, Huaychco and Ayahuanco, supported by the police antisubversive force -- the Sinchis Battalion -- fought and virtually annihilated a column of approximately 50 guerrillas. The peasants reportedly suffered a dozen casualties. There has been no official report on these clahses. Forty more guerrillas, who were part of a column of 70 men, died in clashes with combined police-army forces which were backed by peasants of Sacsamarca and Huancasancos, in Victor Fajardo Province, 110 km south of Ayacucho. It was reported that 12 peasants died in these clashes. In the above region, approximtely 110 km south of Ayacucho, the peasants and soldiers attacked a guerrilla base in the Andes Mountains, near Huancasancos.

It has been reported that a notebook of Abimael Guzman, also known as "Comrade Gonzalo," the top leader of Shining Path, was found in that area. Shining Path is an organization which claims to follow the ideas of Kampuchea's Pol Pot and which has no ties with the other Peruvian communist movements. It has also been reported that among the Victor Fajardo guerrillas was Guzman's Lieutenant, Carlota Tello, "Comrade Carla," who led several attacks in that area.

Havana Reports 802 Dead

PA201944 Havana International Service in Spanish 1800 GMT 20 Feb 83

[Text] Reports that have not yet been officially confirmed indicate that some 802 guerrillas of the Shining Path group were killed in skirmishes with members of the Sinchis police contigent in the provinces of Huamba and (Gaspar Fajardo) in the Peruvian Department of Ayacucho.

According to the reports, 20 peasants who were fighting along with the Sinchis were also killed. It was also reported that a Shining Path unit attacked a police post and hurled sticks of dynamite at the headquarters of the ruling Popular Action Party in the town of Huamachuco, La Libertad Department.

HAVANA REPORTS MURDER INVESTIGATION CONCLUDES

PA191242 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Lima newspapers report that some 15 alleged Shining Path members died in clashes with the police in (Sacsamarca) and Huambalpa, located some 130 km from Ayacucho, in the last 48 hours. It was reported that the commission that is investigating the murder of eight newsmen in the village of Uchuraccay, Ayacucho Department, has returned to the Peruvian capital. The results of its work will be published shortly. Mario Castro Arenas, the president of the investigating commission, has revealed that infantry soldiers witnessed the massacre and added that the victims' belongings were handed over to Navy Lieutenant Ismael Bravo and police Lieutenant Hugo Vidal Ulloa by the peasants charged with the massacre.

AP LEADER ALBA ORLANDINI ON SCHWALB, COUP WARNING

PY181835 Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] AP [Popular Action] Secretary General and Senator Javier Alba Orlandini has praised the mass media coverage of the speech delivered by Prime Minister Fernando Schwalb. He said that the media coverage allowed Peruvians to follow Schwalb's message from the hall of Congress itself. Orlandini remarked that Schwalb's position was clear and that his program of work was based on a frank and realistic approach to our country's situation. Orlandini remarked that Schwalb said that, in this period, which is the hardest of our republican life, only with the support of all sectors will we be able to defeat terrorism, the economic crisis and immorality.

Orlandini also pointed to the dignity of the Peruvian President and recalled that 46 percent of Peruvians voted for him. The senator also stressed that there are those who want to forget that this democratic government has been elected for a 5-year period. He categorically rejected all insinuations that the constitutional president might be disqualified. Orlandini then warned that, if necessary, those Peruvians who defend the democratic system -- AP members in particular -- will go into the streets like they did before, in order to fight coup makers of any origin.

BRIEFS

AMBASSADOR TO ALBANIA APPOINTED -- Peruvian Ambassador to Yugoslavia Carlos Higueras Ramos has been appointed concurrent plenipotentiary ambassador in Albania. Ambassador Higueras Ramos will make a 5-day trip to Tirana, Albania, to present his credentials. [Text] [Lima Domestic Service in Spanish 1100 GMT 11 Feb 83 PY]

100 CUBANS LEAVE ILLEGALLY -- Santos Valdez, member of the new commission of Cuban residents, reported on 31 January that over 100 Cuban refugees who were housed at the Tupac Amaru park have left for the United States with false passports and visas. These Cubans arrived in Peru 4 months ago, after requesting asylum at the Peruvian Embassy in Havana in April 1980. [Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 1 Feb 83 p 1 PY]

ENERGY, MINES MINISTER CALDERON ON PRICES, OPEC

PA182046 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 2009 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Caracas, 18 Feb (LATIN-REUTER) -- Venezuela said today that it will maintain its oil prices, in accordance with OPEC decisions, and announced that it will send missions to oil-producing countries -- whether OPEC members or not -- in search of ways to overcome the present crisis in the oil market. In an improvised press conference, Energy and Mines Minister Humberto Calderon Berti denied that Venezuela has lowered its oil prices by $2, as published today by a Caracas newspaper.

"I deny that Venezuela has lowered its prices. We are complying with OPEC decisions and commitments strictly and will not modify our prices until a decision is made in this regard," the minister said at the outset.

The minister considered it inappropriate for OPEC countries to change their oil prices following a British decision to recommend a $3 cut on the price of its crude oil from the North Sea. "This would mean that we would be giving the leadership to the North Sea and that would be inappropriate," Calderon said, referring to the announcement made by sources in London's industrial sector of the recommendation made by the British state-owned Oil Marketing Corporation. Calderon Berti said that he has already warned the British authorities about the effects of this decision, which might turn the United Kingdom into an oil-importing country. "They will not be able to invest in additional development projects," he said.

Noting that delegations would be sent to oil-producing countries, both OPEC members and others, Calderon Berti said that his objective was to find formulas for overcoming the crisis faced by the world oil market. "We realize that a definite deterioration in the situation would hurt us all and that we must renew efforts to reach an agreement," Calderon Berti added. He said that the delegations, which will visit Great Britain, Norway, Mexico, Algeria, Libya, Nigeria, Gabon, Kuwait, Iran, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Oman and Indonesia, should do the following:

Explain Venezuela's reasons for maintaining current prices;

Make recommendations on abolishing the system direct or indirect discounts (he was referring to credit arrangements, processing agreements, exchange and tax reductions);

Submit definite proposals on price differentials; and

Submit ideas on an international plan for production with a ceiling of 17 to 17.5 million barrels daily, to be distributed among the various OPEC members.

Calderon Berti did not give details of the Venezuelan proposals.

Just 3 weeks ago, OPEC was unable at a special conference to establish quotas for the division of the oil market. Since then, international analysts have been predicting a price drop.

Calderon Berti said that a misinformation campaign has taken place following a press conference 3 weeks ago, "manipulating and twisting" his statement. "This appears to be a misinformation campaign intended to create a psychological state of tension," he indicated.

He also said that a statement he made to a United Arab Emirates news agency in which he expressed opposition to a drop in oil prices has been reproduced by an international news agency (not REUTERS), quoting him as saying that the price drop was favorable.

In view of reports that there might be a decline in oil prices, buyers "hold off, waiting for that drop," Calderon said. He also said that some countries have been resorting to their stocks in order to fulfill the demand for oil. Calderon said that OPEC is currently producing 15 million barrels daily and that the production by non-members brings the figure up to 40 million barrels daily, whereas the world demand is for 45 million barrels.

He noted that Venezuela is selling its oil in accordance with OPEC's reference price, $34 per barrel, with variations based on the quality of the crude. He added that in accordance with OPEC rules, the average price of Venezuelan oil is $27 to $27.50 per barrel. So far this year, Venezuela has exported an average of 1,419,000 barrels per day, Calderon Berti said. However, he mentioned that there was an increase in the week that ended 13 February to an average of 1,628,000 barrels daily. Production has averaged 1,986,000 barrels per day so far this year. Venezuela's income is calculated on the basis of an export figure of 1.6 million barrels per day.

GOVERNMENT SUSPENDS FOREIGN CURRENCY SALES

PA210408 Buenos Aires LATIN in Spanish 0315 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Caracas, 20 Feb (LATIN-REUTER) -- It was officially announced tonight that the government has forbidden the sale of foreign currency tomorrow and Tuesday in view of what they described as a detrimental movement of capital abroad. The announcement was made on a radio and television network after 2 days of meetings among the economic authorities. The meetings ended today with a session of the Council of Ministers that approved the measure.

The communique read over the radio and television network states that the Council of Ministers "analyzed, in a special manner, the detrimental movement of capital abroad that has been occurring recently." The communique adds that "It decided to suspend the sale of foreign currency on 21 and 22 February," and approved a decree authorizing the Central Bank and Finance Ministry to enforce the measure.

Finance Minister Arturo Sosa unexpectedly returned this weekend from a trip to the United States and Europe, where he was refinancing the $6.6 billion foreign debt in the short term. According to the latest report from the Central Bank, Venezuelan foreign currency reserves had dropped to $8,785,000,000 by 11 February, compared to the $10,039,000,000 reported in late 1982 and a peak of $10,350,000,000 in October. As he was leaving the presidential house tonight, where the Council of Ministers met, Minister Sosa excused himself from offering further details on the decision by saying "we will wait until the 2 days have passed."

Herrera To Address Nation

PA212239 Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Venezuelan President Luis Herrera Campins will give a speech this Monday and refer to what has been termed in Venezuela an international financial conspiracy against the country. Venezuelan Finance Minister Arturo Sosa canceled his visit to Japan and Switzerland to attend the event, where the president will announce some decisions. Likewise, (Leopoldo Diaz Brusual), the president of the Central Bank of Venezuela, returned from Europe ahead of schedule. Both officials were negotiating their financing of the external debt. Herrera Campins recently admitted that there exist financial pressures against his country, and that the future appears difficult.

DECREASING WORLD OIL PRICES PROMPT CONCERN

Cabinet Meeting 18 Feb

FL182330 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2335 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Excerpt] Mexico City, 18 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- Mexico will study the possible repercussions that Great Britain's announcement that it will reduce oil prices may have on the national economy, the secretary of mines, energy and semistate industry said. Secretary Francisco Labastida Ochoa said the economic cabinet will meet this afternoon to also study the movements of the world oil market and their possible effect on the country's oil policy.

Organized Price Drop Favored

PA211743 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0405 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, 20 Feb (EFE) -- Today Mexico proposed the need for the oil-producing countries to reach an agreement so that a drop in the price of crude "would be ordered" in response "to the realities of the market." After concluding 3 days of talks with his British counterpart Francis Pym, Mexican Foreign Secretary Bernardo Sepulveda said that the two nations favor holding "consultations among the oil-exporting countries to determine the new prices." Sepulveda said that Mexico and Great Britain agree that a price war should be averted in the sale of crude through an organized reduction process. Great Britain has just announced a decrease of $3 per barrel in its oil price. Sepulveda also said that both OPEC members states as well as the rest of the oil-exporting countries should participate in talks to establish new prices.

Pemex To Announce New Prices

FL220037 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2355 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Mexico City, 21 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- Mexican Petroleum (Pemex) today announced that next Friday it will announce the official prices of the Mexican export crude, retoractive to 1 February. A communique signed by Pemex and the Secretariat of Energy, Mines and Parastate Industry (SEMIP) states that in the meantime the international oil market will continue to be observed to follow developments.

The Oil Foreign Trade Committee met today and it was decided to wait until 25 February to fix the price of the light crude "Istmo" and the heavy "Maya" that is being sold to some 26 countries. This committee is formed by Pemex Director Mario Ramon Beteta and the under secretaries of finance, planning and budget, commerce and industrial development, energy and other Pemex officials. Meanwhile, Pemex is maintaining contact with its clients and the main oil producing and exporting countries in order to set the prices in accordance with the world situation.

REPORTAGE ON QUEEN ELIZABETH, PYM VISIT, TALKS

De La Madrid Hosts Banquet

FL181234 Bridgetown CANA in English 1208 GMT 18 Feb 83

[By Simon Alterman]

[Text] Acapulco, Mexico, Feb 18, CANA-REUTER -- Queen Elizabeth has arrived in Mexico for her first visit to Latin American since Britain went to war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands last year.

Mexican President Miguel de la Madrid, at an open-air banquet here last night, made an oblique reference to the stand his country took over Argentina's occupation of the Falklands, which made Mexico an obvious choice for the state visit. He stressed "the continued validity of the principles of non-intervention and self-determination." He also denounced the use of force and underlined "the prevailing importance of the peaceful solution of conflicts" in his toast to the queen.

The banquet was given in an old Spanish fort originally built to protect Spanish shipping from English pirates, which sits on a hill overlooking the picture postcard setting of this fashionable Pacific resort.

In her toast, the queen expressed sympathy for Mexico's economic difficulties and said Britain will help in the most useful way it can. Addressing the 200 guests, the queen said:

"We have followed with sympathy the economic difficulties which Mexico has recently encountered. You, Mr President, have taken bold and strong measures to deal with them... for our part we have demonstrated by our actions our wish to help in the most useful way we can."

Today the queen and the duke of Edinburgh travel in the royal yacht Britannia to the town of Lazaro Cardenas, where they will visit a plate steel mill being built by the British firm of Davy Loewy. The steelworks is part of a huge development undertaken when Mexico's oil wealth seemed set to produce years of unfettered growth. The country's economic crisis, however, which came to a head last summer when it was unable to make payments on its 80 billion dollar foreign debt -- 16 percent of it with British banks -- has put something of a question mark over the project. The financing for most of the Davy contract, which was signed in 1981 by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on a visit to Mexico, has been guaranteed by the British Government.

From Lazaro Cardenas, the royal yacht will continue northwards to the Mexican ports of Puerto Vallarta and La Paz, leaving Mexican waters on February 25 as the queen begins a visit to the United States.

The royal couple paid a first state visit to Mexico in 1975, seeing many of its historic interior cities, but the queen said in her toast to Mr de la Madrid last night that she had been determined to come back and tour the Pacific Coast, about which she had heard so much.

Mexico, although like most Latin American countries a supporter of Argentina's claim to sovereignty over the Falklands, critisised the Argentine occupation of the islands last April that caused Britain to send a naval task force to regain control over the South Atlantic colony. Although officials had little comment on their meeting, British Foreign Secretary Francis Pym and Mexican Foreign Minister Bernardo Sepulveda had been expected to discuss the topic along with other international issues at a one-and-a-half hour meeting in a beachfront hotel yesterday.

President on Queen's Visit

FL211828 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0027 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Excerpts] Puerto Vallarta, 20 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- At noon today, President Miguel de la Madrid described the visit that Queen Elizabeth II and the duke of Edinburgh made to Mexico as very positive. De La Madrid told an English reporter that the Mexicans are very much impressed by Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip. We are very pleased with their courtesty visit, the Mexican president told the English reporter. He noted that no agenda was established for his talks with the Queen. He stressed that they discussed Mexican and British relations.

Sepulveda Amor Talks With Pym

FL211920 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0124 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Puerto Vallarta, Mexico, 20 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- The conversations held with British Foreign Minister Francis Pym dealt with the world oil situation and the Central American problem, Mexico's Foreign Secretary Bernardo Sepulveda Amor has announced. In a press conference held here this afternoon, Speulveda Amor explained that Mexico had proposed the unification of forces so that oil-producing countries may agree in price structuring and the British foreign minister had concurred. Likewise, the two diplomats had shown concern for the Central American problem, and Mexico had stressed the need for helping countries in the region. They also agreed that conflicts in the area should not go on unchecked. In this respect, Pym agreed with Mexico in the need for European countries to come to the aid of Central America with economic investments aimed at attaining the development of the area.

Sepulveda Amor said that during his talks with the British foreign minister, who accompanied Queen Elizabeth II in her visit to Mexico, he had expressed Mexico's desire that Belize's self-determination be respected, making it possible for its to consolidate its process of independence, decolonization and territorial integrity.

Likewise, Sepulveda Amor indicated he had insisted on the Mexican point of view that the Malvinas conflict (between Great Britain and Argentina) be solved peacefully via a dialogue, and stressed that the best forum for its was the United Nations. The Mexican diplomat reiterated his country's demand for the continuation of the process of decolonization of Central America and that the South American situation should be included in it, noting Argentina's sovereign right over the Malvinas Islands.

FRENCH ROVING AMBASSADOR REPORTS ON TOUR

PA210440 Paris AFP in Spanish 2357 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Mexico City, 19 Feb (AFP) -- Antoine Blanca, French roving ambassador to Latin America, said here today that if more attention had been paid to the joint French-Mexican statement regarding El Salvador, the war in that country would probably register tens of thousands less dead today. The diplomat arrived in Mexico on the last leg of a tour he began on 7 February that took him to Panama, San Jose, Managua, Tegucigalpa and Guatemala.

Blanca told reporters tht the joint statement in which France and Mexico recognized the political representativity of the Salvadoran armed opposition as a basis for seeking peace not only remains valid, but is also completely current and should be urgently implemented. Those who criticized it today admit it was opportune, Blanca added.

Regarding the conflict between Nicaragua and Honduras, the diplomat said that his visit to the two countries gave him the opportunity to find, in both countries, signs of a great will to talk and find solutions.

He refused to comment on the recent Honduran request to the United States for a sale of arms but said that "If the United States believes it is right to sell weapons to Honduras that is their business, as long as these weapons are only used for defensive purposes, as is the case of the French sales to Nicaragua."

In general terms Blanca said that there are currently all types of peace proposals, mostly vague, and said that the true basis for regional peace is included in the recent declaration made on Contadora Island by the foreign ministers of Colombia, Mexico, Panama and Venezuela.

He stressed that the situation in El Salvador is urgent since what happens there affects detente on the isthmus and that France remains willing, if asked, to support positive initiatives.

Regarding Guatemala, the last Central American country he visited, the French ambassador said that in all honesty he had to admit that he left that country with a less schematic and less Manichean feeling than when he arrived there. He said Guatemala is experiencing a very complex situation, and not all events occurring in the same country can be controlled, much less condemned.

CTM LABOR LEADER CALLS FOR PRICE FREEZE

FL182230 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 2133 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Mexico City, 18 Feb (NOTIMEX) -- Fidel Velazquez, secretary general of the Confederation of Mexican Workers (CTM), asserted today that the establishment of a price freeze in Mexico is possible. The 80-year-old leader of the 4-million-strong CTM called on business leaders to do their duty and establish measures for such a price freeze. He warned that the labor movement would continue to fight for protection of wages and said he believed the use of the money (about $11,780,000) collected by the National Solidarity Fund [Fondo Nacional de Solidaridad] to create new jobs was a good decision on the part of President Miguel de la Madrid.

He noted that wages (a minimum of 455 pesos -- about $3 -- per day) are in no way static and ought to move along with prices. He announced that the labor congress plenum -- to which the CTM belongs -- will meet next Monday, 21 February, to decide whether to ask for an emergency wage adjustment in line with the loss in buying power suffered through the minimum wage. According to CTM estimates, labor's buying power dropped by 29 percent in January and by 300 percent up to December 1982.

EXILES RETURN FROM CUBA, REPORT FUTURE PLANS

PA202015 Mexico City EL DIA in Spanish 30 Jan 83 p 3

[By Norma Perez Vences]

[Text] Yesterday, five of Genaro Vasquez Rojas' companeros in the fight returned to Mexico after spending 10 or 12 years in exile in Cuba. They are members of the Revolutionary National Civic Association of Guerrero.

Antonio Sotelo Perez has said: "The fact that we have been accepted in Mexico again means that the political situation in our country has changed." He said that Cuba and Mexico cannot be compared, because their histories are marked by different conditions.

Demostenes Onofre Baldovinos said that Mexico's current conditions permit majority participation. In this regard, he added that given the imminent threat that Mexico's sovereignty will be weakened by its huge foreign debt and the difficulty of paying it, "we are prepared to cooperate as best we can." Baldovinos said that this group of exiles is not against the system but against noncompliance with constitutional mandates. A very clear example of a constitutional violation is the existence of large landholdings throughout the country, he added.

Sotelo rejected any chance of taking up arms again or of promoting a guerrilla struggle, but he said that "We will continue the ideological struggle prompted by Mexico's democratic future."

GENERAL PAREDES ISSUES WARNING TO U.S. AMBASSADOR

PA200142 Panama City Televisora Nacional in Spanish 2300 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Letter from National Guard Commander General Ruben Dario Paredes addressed to U.S. Ambassador Everett Ellis Briggs; date not given -- read by Luz Maria Noli]

[Text] Mr Ambassador: I am obliged to write to you, respectfully but vigorously, to call your attention to some of your actions that exceed the normal functions of a diplomatic representative accredited in our country. Because these actions deal with matters that affect our national security, it is my duty to refer to them in my name as well as in the name of the General Staff and the National Guard, which I command.

On Wednesday 26 January 1983, you went to the main garrison in Colon, 2d Military Zone, seeking on your own initiative and without prior coordination with the general command, to meet with the chief of that zone or with other officers of that command. Such meetings were not held because our officer corps apparently has better knowledge than you do of the protocol proceedings for an ambassador to meet with subordinate officers of the Panama National Guard. On Thursday 17 February 1983 you asked Captain Schaefer to arrange a meeting with Lieutenant Col Lorenzo Purcell, chief of the 5th Military Zone in Chiriqui, and suggested the possibility of having a few drinks with the other officers of the zone, with you providing the liquor. You have again attempted to hold talks and meet with our officers without going through the diplomatic channels of the Foreign Ministry or the National Guard command. In view of these transgressions, I find myself obliged to caution you that if another act of this nature should occur, this command and its General Staff will ask our government to have you recalled from our country.

I would like you to know that Lieutenant General Wallace H. Nutting, who is the highest-ranking U.S. military officer in the Panama Canal area, with whom we maintain close coordination, has always been very careful to respect our military relations. I would not like to believe that your diplomatic post is a disguise for a high-ranking intelligence officer working for U.S. espionage organizations. You know very well that the intervention of diplomats from the United States or any other world power in the internal affairs of other countries not only violates the corresponding international norms, but have all too often caused political and social convulsions, which have even degenerated into bloodshed and insurmountable resentments. Panama is a peaceful country that is trying to perfect a political, economic and social model in line with its reality. We have the logical difficulties of every underdeveloped country, but we face them with absolute dignity and an unrestricted desire for freedom and independence. These precepts are sacred for every Panamanian. A good example are the incidents of 9 January 1964.

We are certain that we are faithfully interpreting the sentiments of our people and government by stating that we desire close, harmonious and respectful relations with your country, as has been traditional in spite of the great bilateral problems we have faced. Harmony in our diplomatic relations is more necessary [obligante] since 1977 because we are partners in the Torrijos-Carter treaties. We feel deep admiration for the U.S. people and for their democratic avocation. We respect your government's civilian and military institutions. Therefore, we feel that we have the right to demand the same respect for our country's civilian and military institutions. In your diplomatic functions with the civilian government and the military high command you have enjoyed wide freedom and every facility. I hope that this frank observation will serve to reinforce our consideration, friendship and respect. Very sincerely yours. All for the homeland.

[Signed] Brigadier General Ruben Dario Paredes, commander in chief of the Panama National Guard

Foreign Ministry Summons Briggs

PA211839 Paris AFP in Spanish 1823 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Excerpt] Panama City, 21 Feb (AFP) -- The Panamanian Foreign Ministry today summoned U.S. Ambassador Everett Briggs, after a strongly worded letter addressed to him by National Guard Commander General Ruben Dario Paredes was made public on Saturday. In the letter, Paredes accuses Ambassador Briggs of carrying out activities that "exceed the normal functions of a diplomatic representative," it has been officially announced.

National Guard Communique

PA220451 Panama City Television Nacional in Spanish 0320 GMT 22 Feb 83

[Communique issued by the Public Relations Directorate of the Panamanian National Guard; date and place not given -- read by announcer]

[Text] Necessary Clarification

1. On 12 January 1983, Dr Helen Marshall Carter, first secretary of the U.S. Embassy in Panama, went to the Colon headquarters, 2d military zone, and asked for a meeting with Maj Fernando Quezada, who in a gentlemanly manner agreed out of courtesy to meet her, thinking it was a formal visit of presentation and greetings. Major Quezada was told by Dr Marshall Carter that she had come on behalf of Ambassador Briggs, and that she had been assigned to investigate the general situation of Colon Province and other places of the country. The Panamanian militaryman became more and more surprised as the diplomat asked him such questions as: How many troops that military zone had; the structure of the National Guard in the province; the type of political activity in the area; and even whether Major Quezada was the brother of Onorio Quezada, secretary of the People's Federal Nationalist Party under formation, with whom she also wanted to speak.

Since she was a lady, Major Quezada decided simply to tell the diplomat that he was not authorized to provide that kind of information. Needless to say, the officer obviously saw that an attempt was being made to subject him to a clumsy intelligence interrogation. Dr Marshall Carter left Major Quezada her business card and telphone numbers. These actions were reported to the institution's command, and this led to an order warning the rest of the chiefs and officers not to be surprised by similar attitudes and not to permit interviews with diplomatic or military officials of any country that had not been previously coordinated by the command.

On 26 January and 31 January, the secretariat of the 2d military zone was notified of Ambassador Briggs' visit to Colon and his desire to visit that city's central garrison. That visit occurred on 1 February at 1000. Major Quezada specifically left Capt Ruben D. Mascunana just to receive him without providing any information, so that no rudeness would be committed. This is what occurred.

2. On 9 February at 1000, U.S. Embassy military officials Colonel Walker, Captain (Sheaffers) and a civilian official as yet unidentified who is described as corpulent, having white hair and approximately 40 to 45 years old, presented themselves without prior coordination to the San Miguelito garrison, 11th military zone, and the office of its chief, Lt Col Leonidas Macias. Knowing his duty, Lieutenant Colonel Macias greeted them for a few minutes and excused himself, since several people wanted to speak with him.

3. On Thursday, 17 February, a U.S. Air Force airplane landed at the Enrique Malek Airport of David at 1003. It was piloted by Col (D. Bollert) and besides the crew carried Captain (Sheaffers). This officer met with Maj Jaime Benitez, executive of the 5th military zone, and told him that on the following day, Friday, Ambassador Briggs would arrive in David, and that besides having a program of meetings with several groups he wished to meet with Lieutenant Colonel Purcell. The U.S. captain also indicated that the U.S. ambassador wanted to have a few drinks in the 5th military zone garrison, and that they would supply the liquor. Since Major Benitez was aware of the order of the National Guard command that foreign diplomats or military officers could not be received without prior coordination, he told the U.S. officer that there was no authorization for Ambassador Briggs' visit to the garrison and much less for a toast.

4. These actions, which more than show an unusual and completely suspicious activity of helping [conllevar] the possibilities of looking for classified information for intelligence use, motivated the well-known energetic note from Gen Ruben Dario Paredes to Ambassador Everett Briggs, the original of which was delivered at 1850 on Saturday, 18 February [as heard], and was received by security guard No 517, (Adolfo Valencia), who signed a receipt for the note at Ambassador Briggs' official residence located in La Cresta neighborhood.

All for the fatherland.

Maj Edgardo Lopez Grimaldo, director of information and public relations of the Panamanian National Guard.

PRD Supports Paredes

PA220007 Panama City Domestic Service in Spanish 2230 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Report by correspondent (Amelia Pad:)]

[Text] The Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, in a press conference held at the party's headquarters today, issued a communique supporting the letter sent by General Paredes to the U.S. ambassador. Present at this press conference were Berta Torrijos de Arosemena, PRD president; Ofidio Diaz, vice president; Rigoberto Paredes; Nils Castro; Sotero Alfonso; and other party leaders. Professor Torrijos de Arosemena read the communique as follows:

[Begin Torrijos de Arosemena recording] PRD declaration. The dignity of the fatherland, above all. On Saturday, 21 February [as heard], the citizenry learned of the letter of national dignity addressed by General Pardees to the U.S. ambassador. That letter is a categorical warning from the Panamanian armed institution to the representatives or officials of any foreign power who attempt to meddle in the internal affairs of our country. That denunciation reveals in part the activities of the ambassador, who in an irresponsible manner has violated the most elemental rules of diplomatic conduct. That attitude contrasts negatively with the democratic traditions of the U.S. people, for whom we have the highest respect.

This is a matter that offends the sensibilities of each and every true Panamanian, independent of political beliefs, because it is something that deals with the sovereignty and dignity of the whole nation. Nevertheless, in a shameful manner, which is no surprise, certain party and press spokesmen of the so-called opposition hastily moved to disparage the letter and its patriotic motivations. This reveals once more the dependent and colonialist attitude of these men.

While Panama is intent on favoring peaceful and democratic solutions for regional problems, safeguarding its borders and people, the aforementioned ambassador and his internal associates seek to introduce conspiratorial policies that are dangerous to national security and the democratic process of our country. It is the Panamanian National Guard high command that is called upon to denounce this situation, because it involves the comings and goings of that gentleman in the Panamanian garrisons. The national government will know how to take the appropriate measures in a timely fashion. In this there is no desire to mar our good relations with the United States. On the contrary, what could mar them is the lack of seriousness of that ambassador, not the just reaction elicited by his improper conduct. The PRD firmly supports the strong, patriotic attitude of General Paredes and his general staff, who with this denunciation demonstrate the unflinching existence of the national spirit of Torrijosism. [end recording]

The PRD this morning decided to declare itself in permanent session to keep abreast of developments and events, so that if another attitude is necessary they can patriotically assume it. They also said that they do not plan to hold any sort of demonstration for the time being to support the patriotic attitude of General Paredes, because it is unnecessary.

More on National Reactions

PA212119 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2035 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Panama City, 21 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- The ruling Democratic Revolutionary Party (PRD) has accused U.S. Ambassador to Panama Everett Briggs and "internal associates" of promoting "conspiratorial policies that are dangerous to the country's security." In a statement issued here today, the PRD supports the content of the letter sent by National Guard Commander General Ruben Dario Paredes to Ambassador Briggs, criticizing him for activities that, according to the letter, "exceed the normal functions of a diplomatic representative."

The PRD described Paredes' message as a "letter of national dignity" and indicated that Briggs has violated "the most elemental rules of diplomatic behavior," endangering the good relations between Panama and the United States. The ruling party clarified that no desire exists to deteriorate good relations between the Panamanian and Washington governments.

The progovernment Federation of Panamanian Students and other sectors have asked that Briggs be declared "persona non grata."

In his letter, General Paredes accused Briggs of "trying to hold talks and actions with National Guard officers without using the diplomatic channel of the Foreign Ministry or the regular channel of the headquarters," and he warned the ambassador that if this is repeated his withdrawal from the country will be requested. The U.S. Embassy has not issued a reply to General Paredes' letter or issued any comment. Today is a holiday in the United States, and a reaction is not expected until tomorrow. The letter of the National Guard commander is dated Saturday, 21 February [as received]

National and foreign journalists were called this morning to be at the Foreign Ministry this afternoon, since Briggs had been summoned to give explanations on General Paredes' charges. The call to the newsmen, was cancelled a little more than 1 hour before the time when, according to the original announcement, the U.S. ambassador was scheduled to arrive at the Foreign Ministry.

Government officials did not give a direct reason for the cancelation of the call to the newsmen, but they allude to the fact that today is a nonworking day in the United States and therefore a nonworking day at the embassy in Panama. They also said that the Briggs case is now being handled "at the highest executive level."

The National Legislation Council is also studying Paredes' charges and it is expected that it will issue a communique in the next few hours, Alfonso Sotero, president of the council, announced. Legislator Sotero attended the news conference at noon in which the PRD announced its support for General Paredes, and he said that he personally expresses solidarity with the criticism against Briggs.

Columnist Scores Briggs, CIA

PA211336 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 21 Feb 83 pp 8, 13

["Notes from the Editorial Board" by Mario Martinez Puente: "What Is Behind the Paredes Letter to Briggs?"]

[Text] What is behind the vigorous and very patriotic statements made by the commander in chief of the National Guard in a letter to the U.S. ambassador in our country?

That was the question which came to mind as soon as I read Gen Ruben Dario Paredes' letter to Ambassador Briggs.

I consider General Paredes' concern to be very normal. Moreover, I believe that it is his right and duty, as commander in chief of the National Guard, to protest the lack of diplomatic tact shown by Ambassador Briggs. Briggs cannot be allowed to try, as he did, to bypass elementary protocol by attempting to meet with the heads of the two most important garrisons in the country: Colon and Chiriqui.

At the national guard level, Commander Paredes' attitude could be seen as a routine matter that could have happened with Briggs or any other diplomat who is unaware of obvious requirements.

However, Briggs is not just any diplomat. Not only has he tried to stick his nose into internal National Guard matters, but he is also seen repeatedly in meetings with politicians of the stature of none less than the controversial Arnulfo Arias Madrid.

It is no secret to any Panamanian, or to any Latin American, that the United States, through its embassies and sinister organizations such as the CIA, has tried to destabilize governments which have not been to its liking.

The cases of Allende in Chile, Arbenz in Guatemala, the present situation in El Salvador, Nicaragua, Cuba and Bolivia can be seen as some examples of the interference of yankee hands in the internal affairs of our America.

Why bother to give more examples, if this interventionist policy of Uncle Sam in matters that are the sole and exclusive prerogative of our peoples has been so obvious historically?

If General Paredes, in his capacity as commander in chief of the National Guard, protests in the most respectful manner possible Briggs' attitude as regards the official's barefaced act of meddling in the internal affairs of our armed institution, I believe that it is the least Paredes could have done.

Moreover, it has not escaped my notice that, as a patriot committed to the homeland's historical future, Commander Paredes must have weighed Briggs' activities in the political area.

It is merely a coincidence that Paredes' letter to Brigga was issued while the ambassador was meeting with Dr Arnulfo Arias at his farm in Boquete.

What were Arias and Ambassador Briggs talking about? It was obviously not coffee and cattle.

It is likely that Commander Paredes left many weighty matters unsaid in addressing Ambassador Briggs, matters that would prove what we all suspect, but that Paredes could not mention because in this instance he has only referred to the issue of the National Guard.

In my opinion, the sinister hand of the yankee CIA is manipulating the shady strings of Briggs' activities. If this is the case, the least that the U.S. Government can do is replace this ambassador with another that is less brazen...and more diplomatic.

CRITICA Urges 'Bilateral Harmony'

PA211347 Panama City CRITICA in Spanish 21 Feb 83 pp 1, 13

[Editorial: "Missive for History"]

[Text] Dense in its patriotic content, balanced and respectful, yet firm and forceful, such is the letter that Brig Gen Ruben Dario Paredes sent to U.S. Ambassador Everett Ellis Briggs.

Diplomatic missions are ruled by standards established by international law; they are the result of consensus among all countries. One of the principles set forth as highly inviolable is the one dealing with domestic affairs.

The basis of peace lies in mutual respect among nations. To a large extent, we have achieved this with the great U.S. people after signing the Torrijos-Carter treaties. Since then, there has been no important popular protest against that fraternal country. The Panamanian people and their government are fulfilling the provisions of those agreements while awaiting the year 2,000, when control over the canal will be completely placed in Panamanian hands.

So far, everything has been more or less alright, thank God.

The violation of these good relations by a diplomatic representative of Ambassador Briggs' rank is inappropriate.

Not long ago, Panamanian and U.S. troops participated in joint military maneuvers that speak of the responsibility and great harmony that exist between our two nations at the armed forces level. Therefore, what interest is there, we ask again, in tarnishing that which has been so arduously achieved?

General Paredes' letter is a friend's missive. A very timely one. It is a message inspired by the postulates of mutual respect. It is vital to preserve bilateral harmony because commitment to the canal is very serious, particularly at this point, in this Central American area.

Paredes Scored, Political Ambition Seen

PA201523 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 20 Feb 83 p 1

["As of Today" column]

[Text] The letter that General Paredes has sent to U.S. Ambassador Briggs causes us very serious thought. Naturally, we can expect serious repercussions in Panama-U.S. relations. To begin with, to state that Ambassador Briggs' actions "exceed the normal functions of a diplomatic representative accredited to our country," after the repeated statements made by former Ambassador Ambler Moss in favor the revolutionary process, is out of place in the strictly diplomatic sense. In the political sense, it is further proof of the institutional disorder that our country is undergoing. The commander of the National Guard, going beyond his duties, is openly usurping the proper authorities' power to direct the country's foreign relations.

We don't know what fundamentally prompted the letter. However, whatever the reasons for it, it is evident that once again the Panamanian people's nationalist spirit is being exploited for the benefit of General Paredes' future presidential candidacy.

In view of past sad experiences, we would say that the National Guard commander is not exactly the individual best suited to give lessons in nationalism, independence and proper conduct in government dealings.

COLUMNIST TAUNTS ILLUECA ON FALKLAND DECREES

PA212308 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 21 Feb 83 p 10A

["Without Rhyme or Reason" column by Mario J. de Obaldia]

[Text] I have the impression that the direction of Panama's foreign relations, a task that according to the Constitution should be in the hands only of the president of the republic, has been assigned to Vice President Jorge Illueca. There is no other explanation for the statements made by Jorge declaring war on behalf of the government he so honorably represents. Like a modern Cincinnatus who sets aside the plow to take up the sword, he also invited the Latin American armies to join him in this epic adventure that will bring new green to the already faded laurels that this call has not been made by an Argentine dictator but by a progressive Panamania, a declared enemy of all the rightist dictatorships (he plays good ball with the leftist ones). It has been this Panamanian who has emerged to patch up the wounds suffered by southern despotism.

I don't know what repercussions there will be in Latin America following this call by the Panamanian Simon Bolivar to initiate a new crusade against nonbelievers. I don't believe his statements will be welcomed in Mexico, for example, where the Queen of England has been received by the Mexican Government as what she is: A true Queen. It is possible that some Army chiefs will call Mr Illueca to say: "Your invitation is very interesting and obliging. Let's sit at a negotiating table to determine what contribution each of us must make. What will be your contribution, General Illueca?" And Jorge, who is unique in the demagogy field, will probably answer: "If General Paredes authorizes me, I could contribute 10 fusileers and 5 machomontes." (It is not necessary to say that Mr Ruben Dario will tell him: "You got yourself into this mess without permission. Get out the best way you can, and don't make more problems for me. I have enough with the U.S. ambassador affair.") And he would add: "I also place at your disposal my well-known talent for speeches, which will make the world tremble. Because you must remember that great victories are won not only with weapons, but also with ideas."

However, Jorge is not a man to stop at small details when it comes to giving advice. A would-be president of the United Nations must also provide the appropriate formula for a solution. So, he would add, fully convinced that neither the Argentines nor the British know what he is talking about: "Great Britain must sit down at the negotiating table to negotiate its withdrawal from the Malvinas. And Argentina must accept nothing else because sovereignty, (and in this I am an authority) is non-negotiable."

I must assume that Mr Illueca -- who is the most brilliant head that the process has for everything concerning foreign policy (poor Jorge is almost bald) -- must have consulted with President de la Espriella before planning his holy war and before stating: "...we have to tell the British that if whey do not leave we will evict them from the Malvinas." I also suppose that he requested the Argentines' authorization to enter the islands and evict the intruders. And if Mr de la Espriella does not hurry to stop his insane race, he will soon ask Fidel Castro's permission to go with General Paredes' boys and evict the gringos from Guantanamo. My buddy Santos Kalamazo [not further identified] says: "We must not put an Indian in charge of distributing the chicha [watered fruit juice]." And he has a point. Because in the end the chicha always ends up getting spilled.

ATTORNEY GENERAL TO PROBE ALLEGED KIDNAPPING

PA191404 Panama City STAR AND HERALD in English 19 Feb 83 p 1

[Text] Panama's Attorney General Rafael Rodriguez plans to probe an alleged kidnapping of a wealthy Iranian youth by Salvadoran guerrillas in Costa Rica a year ago, and held in Panamanian territory until he managed to escape last month.

Although National Guard authorities have declined official comment on the incident, newspapers in San Jose have been giving prominence to Kaveh Yazdani's captivity and subsequent escape.

The 21-year-old Yazdani was kidnapped January 8, 1982, while in a San Jose parking lot. He was moved from place to place until he was taken to a Punta Chame house, 48 miles west of Panama City, as guerrillas bargained fruitlessly with relatives for ransom.

The young Iranian, whose relatives possess large holdings in Costa Rica, finally escaped Jan 30 of this year and was returned to the neighboring country by National Guards, dispatches from San Jose said.

COSTA RICA

ARMED GROUPS REPORTED IN CARIBBEAN AREA

PA191329 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 0105 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] San Jose, 18 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- Rumors of the presence of armed groups on the Caribbean coast have prompted judicial police to move into the area in the last few days.

Residents of the district of La Bomba in the Atlantic port of Limon claim that armed men are training young people to fight in other countries.

Other reports indicate that "there are groups of armed people belonging to the Costa Rican leftwing," and that they travel clandestinely from Limon to the Panamanian border in the south.

Recently, government Deputy Minister Enrique Chacon received a report about the existence of a "subversive" radio station that is heard in the country's southern region.

Following the killing of a rural guardsman in La Bomba, the judicial authorities have been investigating all reports, because several actions seem to have been carried out by "alleged members of the Salvadoran guerrilla forces."

The Judicial Investigation Organization has reported the arrest of a Costa Rican youth suspected of having participated in the attack in which the rural guardsman died. According to the official report, he confessed that he belongs to a group that has staged at least three similar attacks, "during which money was seized for the guerrillas" struggling against the Salvadoran Government.

HONDURAN, SALVADORAN FOREIGN MINISTERS TO VISIT

PA220239 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 0100 GMT 22 Feb 83

[Text] Honduran Foreign Secretary Edgardo Paz Barnica and Salvadoran Foreign Minister Fidel Chavez Mena will arrive in Costa Rica on Wednesday night for a new meeting with Costa Rican Foreign Minister Fernando Volio Jimenez.

They will meet on Wednesday night and on Thursday morning to analyze the results and main aspects discussed during the meeting they held last week, Foreign Minister Volio Jimenez confirmed. When he made the announcement, the Costa Rican foreign minister did not give further details about the subjects of this meeting, which will be the second in a week with the Salvadoran and Honduran foreign ministers.

NICARAGUAN AIR FORCE CAPTAIN DEFECTS 18 FEBRUARY

PA182122 Paris AFP in Spanish 2100 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] San Jose, 18 Feb (AFP) -- Capt Daniel Cedeno Wong, a member of the Nicaraguan Air Force, today defected and came to Costa Rica to join the ranks of the opposition Sandino Revolutionary Front, headed by former Commander Eden Pastora, according to Cedeno Wong himself. Cedeno Wong said he had participated in several Nicaraguan Armed Forces operations.

On his arrival in Costa Rica, the Nicaraguan officer said that his objective was to join the forces of the former "Commander Cero," Eden Pastora, to fight against the present Nicaraguan Government.

Describes Helicopter Crash

PA190321 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2210 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] San Jose, 18 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- A Nigaraguan Air Force official who deserted on 25 January 1983 said today at a news conference in this capital that the helicopter crash in which 75 Miskito children, 9 women and 4 technicians died was caused by overloading, rather than by weapons fire by former Somozist guardsmen, as was reported at the time.

Lt David Antonio Cedeno Wong, a Panamanian, specialized in the handling of Soviet heliocopters. He accused Commander Willy Raul Venerio, first chief of the Sandinist Air Force; and officer Aristides Sotelo, chief of the helicopter squadron, of being directly responsible for the Miskitos' death "because they ordered the aircraft to take off despite the overloading."

Cedeno said he would ask the Inter-American Human Rights Commission to investigate the accident, adding that he would place himself at its disposal.

He says that while conducting the rescue operation, he confirmed that the aircraft had not been fired upon, "even though it is true that it had been flying over the area in which the Sandinist Army was counterattacking several columns of former Somozist guardsmen that had entered the Miskito region."

The former officer said that "the truth about the cause of the accident" was distorted on hehalf of those who wield power in Nicaragua," when it was claimed that the former Somozist guardsmen had downed the aircraft.

The Panamanian also charged that a pilot named Gustavo Gonzalez is currently in a Nicaraguan jail, serving a 7-year sentence after having been declared a "traitor to the revolution" merely because he "asked the military command to discharge him from the Sandinist army."

According to Cedeno, after 3 and 1/2 years of serving in Nicaragua as an armed forces official, he requested but was denied permission to withdraw from the army. This led him to desert and he added: "I am here, now, as an organized and active member of the Sandino Revolutionary Front, which is commanded by Eden Pastora," Nicaragua's "Commander Cero."

Cedeno explained that he is making these charges because he does not want to be an accomplice in developments that run contrary to the nature of the revolution he supported. According to him, he stayed in Nicaragua until now because he "believed that things would change."

Finally, he said that violence in the north, on the Atlantic coast, in Zona Franca and on the Cebemben plains is taking place because of "the stubbornness of the leaders, who do not want a democratic opening that would allow political power to reside among the people and with those they elect to rule them."

EL SALVADOR

ARMY REJECTS TRUCE DURING POPE'S VISIT

PA191922 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1821 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] San Salvador, 19 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- the Salvadoran Army will not agree to the truce requested recently by the church on the occasion of the upcoming visit of his holiness Pope John Paul II. Defense Minister Gen Jose Guillermo Garcia stated at a press conference today that his troops will continue to fight, because they are dutybound to defend the people.

Msgr Arturo Rivera Y Damas, apostolic administrator of San Salvador, asked 15 days ago that the two parties in the Salvadoran conflict agree to a truce before the arrival of the pope, scheduled for 6 March. The FMLN has not stated its position on this request to date. General Garcia admitted that in the last few hours the army has begun a large operation in the area of Suchitoto, 40 km north of this capital, which has been harrassed by the guerrillas for 8 days now. Inhabitants of the Northern Highway area between San Salvador and the northern part of the country reported that some 40 army trucks were seen heading toward Suchitoto.

The defense minister called the press conference to present U.S. Democratic Congressmen Clarence Long, Matthew McHugh and Julian Dixon, who are visiting this capital. The U.S. congressmen said that they were favorably impressed by the country and will make it a point to insist that the United States continue its economic and military assistance to El Salvador.

REPORT ON GARCIA NEWS CONFERENCE; ARMY ACTIONS

PA200322 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL in Spanish 1800 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Communique released by the Salvadoran Armed Forces Press Committee on 19 February -- place not given -- read by announcer]

[Excerpt] The armed forces launched large-scale operations today in several parts of the country to protect vital sectors of our population, Defense and Public Security Minister Gen Jose Guillermo Garcia announced at a news conference. The situation in the country is favorable to the armed forces, General Garcia said, adding that he could not provide figures about the military casualties, but stressed that the armed forces will never let our people perish.

Concerning his views on Pope John Paul II's upcoming visit, he said that as a Catholic and Salvadoran, he felt the pope's arrival would be very relevant in filling the Salvadoran people with spirituality. As for the truce that the Catholic Church has requested from both the armed forces and the extremists, he categorically asserted that the armed forces cannot be asked for a truce because they are not fighting another nation, but bad Salvadorans manipulated from abroad. The subversives should be asked to abandon their violent stance so there can be peace, General Garcia said.

Finally, he said that beginning today the armed forces are carrying out control tasks in various parts of the country, and he asked the people to remain calm and to trust their armed forces, which are sure to win this imposed war.

Here is more information. The Salvadoran Army persecutes the terrorist groups. The terrorists are doing all they can to obtain propaganda for the violent actions they are staging in a number of towns while attacking defenseless civilians. It has been learned that former army captains Mena Sandoval and (Cruz Cruz) are being used as propaganda elements by the terrorists, who reportedly do not yet completely trust them. In their desperate effort to regain an image among the people, the subversives are cynically using the two former captains as instruments to obtain what in their view is information about the glorious national army's military actions and tactics. Furthermore, these traitors to their armed forces and their people are at the disposal of terrorist commander Jorge Melendez, alias Jonas. So far, he does not trust them enough to enlist them in his ranks.

As part of an integrated military action supported by the civilian population, the brave Salvadoran Army is constantly persecuting the terrorists prowling around (Los Quebranches), who were headed for Mozote, Morazan Department. According to an official communique, the national army engaged in a clash with 150-200 enemies of the homeland, who tried to confront the army. During the clash, which lasted several hours, the army killed 28 of them and wounded many others. The army has no casualties to report. The armed forces reportedly continue searching through this area.

Garcia Interview

PA192238 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Interview granted by Salvadoran Defense Minister General Jose Guillermo Garcia to local and foreign newsmen, shortly after his meeting with U.S. Democratic congressmen on 19 February, in the defense minister's office in San Salvador -- recorded]

[Text] [Question] General, tell us about this visit. Who are the visitors and what is the purpose of their visit?

[Answer] That was Senator Long. [Word indistinct] pass me that (?editorial), with the names [words indistinct]. This (?is) Senator Long. They are all Democrats. They are making a tour in an effort to learn about our country's situation. We have reviewed strictly military situation, since they themselves have said that they are the ones who decide whether or not military aid in particular, and economic aid in general, should be provided. Therefore, we have reviewed... [changes thought] Here it is: He is Democratic Congressman for Maryland Clarence Long, president of the congressional subcommittee in charge of the foreign operations budget. He controls the defense and AID [Agency for International Development] budget for El Salvador. You see the post he holds; thus, the importance of his visit. The other visitors are Democratic Congressman for New York Matthew McHugh, Democratic Congressman for California Julian Dixon, foreign operations subcommittee official (Edwin Power), foreign operations subcommittee official (William Swerf), AID official (Kelly Hammerer) and Major (John Haig), the Defense Department's aide-de-camp.

[Question] How long was the meeting, general?

[Answer] It lasted an hour. We reviewed the military situation briefly. You can imagine the topics, the subjects, that we discussed. From this talk we obtained the possibility of aid. Undoubtedly, this is important for us. According to them -- and this is why I wanted you to talk to them -- they are willing to help.

[Question] General, on a different topic, we have learned that a vast counterinsurgency operation began this morning in the Guazapa and Suchitoto area. We can imagine what this is all about, but we would like you to explain this for the Salvadoran people. [words indistinct].

[Answer] Sure. As we have always said, this is our disadvantage in the military area: Surprise, as a principle of war, is pretty difficult to maintain for obvious reasons. One can see, one can hear and this leads to thought and analysis. For reasons that you must understand, I will not mention sites. As this is demanded of me by the military, I must not mention the area. However, since you already know about this operation, I will say, yes, it is true, an operation is being launched to protect vital sectors of our population. For obvious reasons, I will not provide details. I'm sure you will understand me.

[Question] What is the current situation in Suchitoto?

[Answer] As you may know, Suchitoto has been isolated. Efforts are currently underway to counteract this isolation and I think we will succeed in the next few hours so as to provide true guarantees for Suchitoto, which has suffered so much. It has cost us several lives, there have been clashes and struggles, but I think that the Suchitoto problem will be resolved in the next few hours.

[Question] General Garcia, military sources in Suchitoto announced this morning that a curfew had been established from 1800 to 0600. What can you tell us about this?

[Answer] Yes, this option is open to the local military commands in order to fulfill their obligations and, naturally, to achieve the goals pursued, especially in the area of Suchitoto which, as you know, (?has been the site of fighting) in the last few days.

[Question] Is there a current report on the casualties in Suchitoto?

[Answer] No. After the meeting with Senator Long, I will check that. I don't have any figures right now.

[Question] What about the situation in the rest of the country?

[Answer] Well, it might be described as satisfactory. The Armed Forces are staging actions in several places. This is our reaction to this imposed struggle. I would like to send a message to the Salvadoran people through you, through the media, which, I have always thought, are important in generating opinions: They must trust the Armed Forces; they must never lower their morale, and they can rest assured that we are sure that we must win this struggle. Remember that this is an imposed struggle. Still, we are doing everything in our power and making every sacrifice to turn this into a reality. The people must trust us; they must not allow themselves to be impressed by rumors or tales, for absolutely nothing negative is happening. We are aware of our mission. We are doing everything in our power. They can rest assured that the Armed Forces are currently fulfilling and will continue to fulfill their sacred mission. At no time will we let our people perish. The people must remain confident. They must be sure that we will pull through and that we will succeed in guaranteeing peace in our country along with our people's development, which is so necessary and craved. We are sure of this. As newsmen, I especially beg of you to forward this message to our people, for they sometimes become confused and discouraged. They can rest assured that we are advancing and that we are achieving our goals.

[Question indistinct]

[Answer] As any Catholic or Salvadoran, I think this is a great event. This is a great opportunity for the spiritual aspect to become clearer and more open on behalf of our people. One should not neglect the spiritual aspect. Many may doubt my words, but for me, the spiritual aspect is essential to national conduct and development. Since our people are fervently religious. I think that the holy father's presence here in El Salvador will be a historic development of huge importance that will fill a spiritual vacuum among our people.

[Question] Regarding the pope's visit, the archbishop of San Salvador has asked both sides for a 2-day truce. What is your view on this?

[Answer] I don't think we can be asked for any truce, since we are not fighting another country. Somehow, we are fighting brothers who disagree with the democratic scheme and who, of course, are being aided by foreign nations. At no time, however, is it valid to make this type of request. The request should be that the subversives abandon their violent stance and participate in the democratic scheme, which is what the people have demanded and want. I think one of the two sides should be told to abandon its violent stance on behalf of the Salvadoran people. We are merely fulfilling our sacred and constitutional mission of safeguarding our peoples' interests. The Constitution itself orders us to do this; this is why the Salvadoran Armed Forces exist. We are merely reacting. As we have said many times before, this violent struggle is imposed from abroad by bad Salvadorans, by bad brothers, who either have failed to understand, refuse to understand, or have failed to realize that violence is not the alternative. The alternative is the democratic process for which we are fighting and which we are emphatically defending.

U.S., SWEDISH NEWSMEN MISSING SINCE 14 FEB

PA182011 Paris AFP in Spanish 1956 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] San Salvador, 18 Feb (AFP) -- Three foreign correspondents, two Swedes and one North American, have been missing since Monday. Their car was found abandoned today near Guazapa, 28 km north of San Salvador, the authorities reported.

Swedish journalists James Rydftrom, 27, and Tom Thuliw, 22, and North American Michael Luhan, 30, left their hotel on the morning of 14 February "to cover the situation in the interior of the country" and have not returned, the owner of their hotel said. The newsmen's vehicle was brought to San Salvador today by soldiers from the First Infantry Brigade, who provided no details.

Luhan who is from Indiana, arrived in the country with credentials from the DALLAS MORNING NEWS, but he worked independently. The other two journalists are also "free-lancers." The Swedish and U.S. Embassies have not issued statements on the issue.

Message Via Red Cross

PA212219 Paris AFP in Spanish 2153 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] San Jose, 21 Feb (AFP) -- A recording, apparently with the voice of U.S. newsman Michael Luhan, missing since 14 February in a strife-torn area of El Salvador, was sent today by the AGENCIA INDEPENDIENTE DE PRENSA of El Salvador to the AFP offices in San Jose. In the recording, the newsman asked the International Red Cross for protection in order to leave the area where intense battles are being waged between guerrilla and army forces.

Luhan's request was broadcast last night by Radio Guazapa, a new clandestine station of the Salvadoran insurgents that began transmissions on (?Saturday). The fate of the U.S. journalist had been unknown up to now. He and two Swedish newsmen, James Rydftrom and Tom Thuliw, disappeared near Guazapa hill, 30 km north of San Salvador.

Further on Red Cross Efforts

PA212349 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 2333 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] San Salvador, 21 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- The International Red Cross in El Salvador is "trying to obtain access to the Guazapa area" where Swedish journalists, James Rydstrom and Tom Thulin and U.S. journalist Michael Luhan recently disappeared.

According to information from a Salvadoran guerrilla station, the three newsmen, who are in a FMLN camp, have asked the International Red Cross for protection to leave the country. The International Red Cross told ACAN-EFE that it has learned of the request in an "indirect manner," and that it is trying to obtain the necessary permit to reach Guazapa, 20 km north of San Salvador.

The Red Cross spokesman stressed that the missions of that organization have the object of supplying food and medicine, and possibly of giving the necessary protection to persons who request it.

The three foreign newsmen were declared "missing" on Friday, 7 days after they said in their hotel that they would be gone for 2 days. Their automobile was found empty near Guazapa on Friday.

REBEL PATROL AMBUSHED IN MORAZAN DEPARTMENT

PA182110 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 18 Feb 83 p 2

[Excerpt] San Miguel -- According to military information, 28 terrorists were killed in an ambush they set up against a Ramon Belloso Battalion patrol in Mozote Canton, Meanguera, Morazan Department. The attack was carried out by some 100 subversives, and even though they were at an advantage, the military patrol was able to repel the attack, killing 28 terrorists and wounding several.

The military reports add that the Ramon Belloso Battalion reported three soldiers dead and five wounded. The wounded soldiers were transferred to the San Salvador military hospital. The bodies of the dead soldiers were taken to Gotera Base and given to the families.

The Ramon Belloso Battalion is patrolling Morazan Department; its general headquarters is in Perquin, which borders Honduras. According to the military information, the attack occurred approximately 12 km from the general headquarters.

ARMY ON CHICHONTEPEC VOLCANO CLEANUP OPERATION

PA182324 San Salvador LA PRENSA GRAFICA in Spanish 18 Feb 83 pp 2, 9

[Excerpts] San Vicente -- 5th Infantry Brigade and Zacatecoluca Engineering School soldiers yesterday continued to smash subversive hideouts on the Chichontepec volcano, it was reported. The counterinsurgency operation began 2 nights ago with heavy artillery fire. It was reported that the objective of the operation is to completely eliminate the hideouts of the terrorists, who for some time have occupied the side of the volcano.

Locations of the hideouts or camps that operate in this mountainous area were obtained by troops who a few days ago were being held by the subversive group but who staged a mass escape from the tunnels in which they were being held, said the official source. At the conclusion of the operation, it was reported, the country's paracentral zone is expected to return to normal. Areas now being shelled by the Salvadoran Army are where the extremists used to appear to ambush and assault automobile drivers who were heading toward the eastern part of the country.

Several companies of soldiers from the two military outfits are slowly climbing up the Chichontepec volcano. The result of the operation will be made public in the next few days, it was reported. It was reported finally that the 5th Brigade is constantly smashing subversive camps throughout San Vicente Department through small, local operations.

'MILITARY AUTHORITIES' ON SUCHITOTO FIGHTING

PA182357 San Salvador EL MUNDO in Spanish 18 Feb 83 p 3

[Excerpts] The heavy artillery duel between the military forces and the guerrillas intensified last night and this morning in Suchitoto in what appears to be an attempt by the extremists to take over the city, local military authorities reported.

In spite of the fact that reinforcements were airlifted in yesterday, which is the only access route for the troops since the highway remains in the hands of the extremists, this has been insufficient to control the situation and the guerrilla threat to take over the city is increasing.

The military posts along the highway have disappeared, said the local authorities, and the reinforcements from the Cojutepeque military brigade arrived in a helicopter used to protect the city. These include members of the National Guard, police and civil defense.

Meanwhile, the situation of the civilians is getting tense because the food reserves are running low and there is no way to resupply. "We are receiving supplies," said a military source, "but the civilian population is not."

It is urgent that the International Red Cross and other organizations do something, said the source.

The source said 60- and 90-mm mortar fire was exchanged throughout the night, and added that the extremists launched shells containing RPG-2 [as heard] fell onto private homes. It was reported that inhabitants took refuge in the church last night and slept there for security reasons.

The siege of the city has entered its 8th day, according to the authorities. The guerrilla attacks originate in Palo Grande, El Roblar, Platanar, El Chaparral, Estansolas, Los Palitos and Las Bermudas cantons, where they have camps, the military source said.

In the Guazapa area at km 7 of the main highway, there was a clash yesterday between 1700 and 2000, but no casualties have yet been reported. The extremists attacked the San Jose las Flores colony of Tonacatepeque.

More on Suchitoto

PA202354 Paris AFP in Spanish 2128 GMT 20 Feb 83

[Text] San Salvador, 20 Feb (AFP) -- The Salvadoran Armed Forces have managed to regain control of the situation in Suchitoto, which was besieged by the guerrillas for 9 days, according to military sources in Suchitoto today.

In a curt but vigorous statement to AFP, an officer stationed in Suchitoto said that "the situation is normal" and that the city "is no longer under siege" by the rebels.

Last Saturday, the army initiated the transfer of 3,500 soldiers with tanks and heavy artillery to the environs of Suchitoto and to an area in northern Chalatenango Department in an effort to dislodge the FMLN guerrillas. According to the reports, the military tactic consisted of an encircling operation with air support "to clear the rebel hideouts in the immediate outskirts of Suchitoto," which had been without light or water and experienced a serious food shortage.

Sources close to the army in San Salvador confirmed that the counterinsurgent action was successful, without stating the number of casualties or revealing details of the current situation in Suchitoto.

It was reported that the Armed Forces Press Committee (Coprefa) will issue a bulletin tomorrow on the extent of the military operations in that region, which is considered strategic because it contains El Salvador's two largest electric power plants.

In statements to AFP, Defense Minister Gen Guillermo Garcia had announced the operation but without giving precise details, although he did say it would be carried out in the vicinity of Guazapa, 32 km to the north, and in Suchitoto.

On that occasion, General Garcia expressed the conviction that "Suchitoto's problem will be resolved in the next few hours." The guerrillas have so far made no statements on that area's situation.

MILITARY REPORTS REBEL ATTACK ON GROUND STATION

PA212011 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSU in Spanish 1800 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Armed Forces Press Committee Communique issued in San Salvador on 21 February]

[Text] Subversives have attacked the ground station and installations of the National Telecommunications Administration [Antel] in a crazy attempt to keep the Salvadoran people from seeing the pope. Last Saturday at 2300, a group of subversives attacked the antel ground station and installations, damaging the parabolic antenna. The attack was a criminal attempt to keep the Salvadoran people and the rest of the world from seeing on their televisions the arrival and multititudinous welcome to be given here to Pope Paul II. The terrorist attack was designed to prevent those persons, whose daily activities will not permit them to attend the mass to be said by the pope, from a special platform in downtown San Salvador, from seeing him on their televisions and all the ceremonies and acts in which the pontiff will participate. As a means of disinformation, the action was part of a strategic plan to keep the whole world from witnessing how much our people want peace and the joint efforts being made with the government so that the pope's stay in the country will be the greatest religious event ever to take place in El Salvador.

The attack on the ground station is an attack on the people's faith and an offense to the holy pope who was once attacked by Marxist-Leninists.

What do the subversives want to accomplish with these irrational attacks? Why is there so much hate and madness? Is it because they seek to eliminate the Christian faith of the Salvadoran people with criminal acts as has happened in Cuba, Russia and Nicaragua? The attack on the ground station was an attempt to destroy it and prevent the world from seeing via satellite how the holy pope is honored by a courageous people who want peace and who will never lose their religious faith.

Despite the fact that the attack on the station was a surprise, military guards in the area repelled the attack and prevented further damage. It was learned that supreme efforts are underway to make the necessary repairs so that the Salvadoran people and the Catholic world can have spiritual joy of watching the grand event on their televisions in which we will demonstrate once again our faith in God and our wish to live in peace.

PCN DEPUTIES JOIN NEW SALVADORAN PARTY

PA182258 San Salvador EL DIARIO DE HOY in Spanish 18 Feb 83 pp 3, 38

[Excerpts] The nine dissident, or autonomous, deputies who in the past belonged to the National Conciliation Party, PCN, were formally included yesterday in the electoral register of the Salvadoran authentic Institutional Party, PAIS, a party in formation. A meeting described as extraordinary, attended by PAIS leaders, was held on the occasion.

The nine deputies who have registered in PAIS are: Maria Julia Castillo, Carmen Canas de Lazo, Angel Armando Alfaro, Napoleon Bonilla, Jr., Carlos Arnulfo Crespin, Daniel Ramirez, Alfredo Marquez, Juan Francisco Puquirre and Ismael Ayala.

It was unofficially said that there is a possibility that PAIS may be joined shortly by four deputies from the Nationalist Republican Alliance, Arena, and two from the Christian Democratic Party, PDC. It was said that this would effectively reinforce the new party's political bases.

NEW REBEL STATION REPORTS SUCHITOTO FIGHTING

PA220356 (Clandestine) Radio Guazapa in Spanish to El Salvador 0140 GMT 22 Feb 83

[Communique issued by the Joint Command of Guazapa Front on 21 February, signed by Commander Misael Gallardo -- read by announcer]

[Text] Since 10 February, our Guazapa front has maintained a constant military offensive on Calle Nueva road, which links San Martin to Suchitoto. We have been able to defeat the government army at all the posts it maintained; and so far, after 11 days, we continue to maintain control over this strategic road. As part of this offensive by our front, Oratorio de Concepcion was occupied on Thursday, 17 February. To this is added the siege that our forces continue to maintain over the city of Suchitoto.

The enemy's reply was to launch a counteroffensive on Saturday, 19 February, against the central front on Guazapa mountain. In order to undertake this attack, the enemy concentrated 5 battalions, approximately 3,500 men, as well as air support. According to our military intelligence sources, the armed forces have begun advances against our positions from five directions: 1. Attacking from Guazapa mountain, the national army seized the position of Los Danchos. After a skillfull maneuver by our forces, they [not further identified] seized that position. 2. They attacked the position of (El Caballito) from above, with intense bombings. 3. They attacked El Zapote canton. 4. They attacked Palo Grande canton. 5. They attacked our positions in (Llano el Rancho) canton. At this time there is still heavy fighting in those places, without the government army being able to achieve its objective of entering the areas under our control.

So far, there have been many armed forces casualties; 30 casualties in El Salitre and La Cruz, 15 in El Zapote and 2 in Suchitoto, which our force continue to besiege. We repeat: our forces continue to besiege the city of Suchitoto. We energetically denounce to the national and international conscience the indiscriminate bombings against the civilian population by A-37 Dragonfly and Fouga Magister airplane, and U.S.-made Huey helicopters. We ask our listeners to be listening to the transmissions of Radio Guazapa, the voice of Cuscatlan, since in forthcoming broadcasts we will be giving more reports on the intense battles being waged at this time on Guazapa mountain. Guazapa, 21 February 1983. United to win until the final victory; revolution or death, we will win! For the joint command of the Guazapa Front, Commander Misael Gallardo.

GUATEMALA

DEFENSE MINISTER REJECTS U.S. CONGRESSMAN'S VIEWS

PA182143 Guatemala City Cadena de Emisoras Unidas in Spanish 0050 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Guatemalan Defense Minister General Oscar Mejia Victores today said that U.S. Democratic congressman Clarence D. Long sounded like a member of the Poor Peoples Guerrilla Army, EGP, yesterday. We are not going to accept the U.S. congressman's statements and admit responsibility for the massacres of peasants, General Mejia said. He added that Long at times sounded like a member of Amnesty International, at other times like an inquisitor, and at others like an EGP member.

The high Guatemalan military officer's reaction took place today. Long yesterday told the Guatemalan media that while he visited Guatemalan refugee camps in Mexico, the people accused the army of being a band of murderers because many of them were mistreated, murdered or suffered the burning of their lands and harvests, which made them flee to Mexico.

The minister said that the refugees now in Mexico under UN protection give aid and logistical support to the subversives who infiltrate into Guatemala, where they commit all kinds of abuses and return to Mexico with impunity.

General Mejia today rejected Long's accusations and said that the U.S. representative threw a tantrum because he was disgusted when the army refused to accept responsibility for the massacres. He also said the congressman should remember that U.S. Ambassador John (Godenmain) was assassinated by a commando of the Rebel Armed Forces, FAR, in 1966. He also said that a communist government in Guatemala was ousted in 1954 with U.S. aid.

Mejia Vitores then referred to Long's words as he left Guatemala, and said that the congressman left discouraged but he is right, because he is too old. Mejia Victores lastly said he had refused to answer Long's question of why Guatemala wanted more weapons, because he could not give this information to a congressman such as Long, who visited Guatemala for the sixth time -- accompanied by other Democratic congressmen. These congressmen are members of the Foreign Operations Subcommittee of the Appropriations Committee in the U.S. House of Representatives.

MEXICAN AMBASSADOR DENIES LONG'S CHARGES

PA191707 Guatemala City Cadena de Emisoras Unidas in Spanish 1230 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Yesterday Mexican Ambassador Brig Gen Rafael Macedo Figueroa denied a statement by U.S. Congressman Clarence D. Long that Guatemalan refugees are being mistreated in Mexico. Quite the opposite is true, the ambassador said, because the refugees are protected in every way in terms of security and livelihood. Our country's health services also provide them with appropriate shelter and medical treatment, he added.

Macedo Figueroa also confirmed that the Mexican Government never said that the Guatemalan Army attacked the refugee camps in Mexico. It was only reported that the attacks were perpetrated by armed men dressed as civilians.

FRENCH ENVOY ENDS VISIT, LEAVES FOR MEXICO

PA200512 Paris AFP in Spanish 2217 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Guatemala City, 19 Feb (AFP) -- Antoine Blanca, French roving ambassador for Latin America, said he was "less pessimistic" than when he arrived with respect to the situation in Guatemala, adding that President Rios Montt "is sincere," although "it is obvious that he does not have the real powers to resolve the country's great problems."

Blanca is on a reconnaisance tour of Central America, excluding El Salvador, and arrived in Guatemala on Thursday. He left for Mexico today.

French President Francois Mitterrand's envoy met with Gen Efrain Rios Montt and Foreign Minister Eduardo Castillo on Friday. He also met with several of the country's political figures.

Blanca told AFP that "my honest impression is that the present Guatemala is much more complex than I had believed," and that the same opinion prevails in the West.

He said that during his brief visit to the country "I took note of the projects to democratize the country," and affirmed that these "can result in new realities."

Reagarding his conversation with the Guatemalan president, the ambassador explained that the talks were "frank and direct" and that he did not disguise the French Government's concern over some of the country's problems.

He said the French are concerned that "violations of the most elemental human rights persist in some areas," and that paramilitary groups "are still present, although they do not operate in the cities in particular and the weapons are real, although they remain hidden."

According to Blanca, General Rios Montt did "not deny these realities, but did confirm his democratization projects and his desire not to remain in power."

The Guatemalan president expressed "his sentiment that the Indian majority has been neglected in Guatemala for 490 years and that when it was taken into consideration, it was enslaved."

"I have the impression that Rios Montt is sincere in analyzing the country's reality and that he wants to change things, although it seems obvious that he does not have the real power to implement an ambitious program of the complexity and size needed to resolve its problems," he said.

The French ambassador said that during his visit and in his talk with Rios Montt "I recalled the two best friends I had in Guatemala were Alberto Fuentes Mohr and Manuel Colom and I am sorry that I could not embrace them on this trip."

Both were murdered during Gen Romeo Lucas Garcia's administration, supposedly by paramilitary groups. They were considered the country's most distinguished social democratic leaders.

Regarding his meetings with political leaders, such as Christian Democrat Vinico Cerezo and former presidential candidate Alejandro Maldonado, Blanca said that "I leave with admiration for the democratic affirmation of certain personalities," and stressed their "physical and moral courage."

On French-Guatemalan relations, he siad that "Central America's largest and most important country could not disappear from France's concern."

He said that "we want the conditions to exist so that bilateral relations can become closer," but he considered that "these conditions do not fully exist today." He concluded that "I am leaving less pessimistic than when I arrived."

In refering to the Central American situation, Blanca said that in order to end the tension in the area, it is necessary to "negotiate a solution," and that after this the other Central American conflicts "will solve themselves."

Blanca's visit to Guatemala went almost unnoticed by the press and the government did not even report his meeting with the president and the foreign minister.

Local diplomatic circles were interested in the visit due to the French position toward the regaion, which was harshly criticized during the previous administration; especially the French-Mexican declaration that demanded talks in El Salvador with guerrilla participation.

HONDURAS

PRESIDENT DENOUNCES 'MARXIST-LENINIST PLAN'

PA212139 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1646 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 21 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- Honduran President Roberto Suazo Cordova has denounced the existence of a Marxist-Leninist plan to destabilize his government. The Honduran president spoke in the city of La Ceiba on the country's Atlantic coast during the inauguration of a private industrial complex over the weekend.

Suazo Cordova said "there is a plan by national and international communism to try to achieve a division between the civilian government that I head and the armed forces."

He indicated that the state and army security forces are on the trace of the masterminds of the plan, who are also keeping up a campaign of "misinformation" in local and foreign media that harms Honduras' image. Suazo Cordova said: "My government has the firm support of the armed forces, and it is ready to stop the perverse intentions of those who are trying to destabilize it."

PAZ BARNICA INVITES D'ESCOTO TO INSPECT BORDER

PA220033 Tegucigalpa Domestic Service in Spanish 1130 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text of invitation sent by Honduran Foreign Relations Secretary Edgardo Paz Barnica to Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto Brockman on 18 February 1983 -- read by announcer]

[Text] Your Excellency Miguel d'Escoto Brockman, foreign minister, Managua, Nicaragua.

I am honored to address Your Excellency on the occasion of extending a cordial invitation so that together we may visit the border region between our two countries, so that you may ascertain that there are no grounds for the tendentious campaign that has been mounted at the international level by the illustrious Government of Nicaragua with the intention of discrediting the absolute neutrality of Honduras in relations to the international conflict being experienced by your country.

Your Excellency may choose to visit those specific points where there allegedly exist Nicaraguan counterrevolutionary camps, with the assurance that you will become convinced that the constitutional and democratic Government of Honduras fully respects the principle of nonintervention in other states' affairs, and the peoples' right to self-determination.

With the hope that Your Excellency will kindly accept this invitation, which has been issued with the sincere spirit of conciliation that prevails in my government in its struggle for regional peace, I would greatly appreciate it if Your Excellency would set a time and place for this meeting, in order to make the necessary arrangements.

I reiterate to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest and most distinguished consideration.

Edgardo Paz Barnica, foreign relations secretary of Honduras.

FRENCH ENVOY EXPLAINS PEACE MISSION IN AREA

PA181708 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1145 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Here we have a report by Danilo Antunez about the reception hosted yesterday by the Honduran Foreign Secretariat for Antoine Blanca, the French president's special envoy. Antoine Blanca, French President Francois Mitterrand's personal envoy, said that he is here on a peace mission, but declined to answer when asked why France is selling arms to Nicaragua. Here is a report by Danilo Antunez from the Secretariat:

[Begin recording] [Blanca] My visit to Central America reflects the concern of French President Francois Mitterrand and the French Government over the Central American situation, which has grown alarming and could become even more so in view of potential developments. Therefore, we have come on a peace mission, to promote peaceful solutions.

[Antunez] After your meetings with government officials of the Central American countries, what is your impression of the area?

[Blanca] We feel that it is urgent that the region's countries, particularly the large neighboring countries in the Caribbean Basin, adopt initiatives seeking negotiations to solve the Salvadoran problem, which we consider the main issue. If there are chances of negotiation, there is the possibility of finding moderate ways to secure peace in El Salvador. I think that if a moderate, democratic solution involving the participation of all sectors could be found, there would be detente throughout the region. France will not undertake any initiative, but it is inclined to support such initiatives undertaken by the region's countries.

[Antunez] How can the French Government speak of peace for Central America while it is selling arms to Nicaragua?

[Blanca] I don't wish to give a brief response to that question. I would have to respond at length.

[Antunez] Please do; we are here to serve you.

[Blanca] No, there is someplace I must go. [end recording]

News Conference Remarks

PA190438 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1145 GMT 18 Feb 83

[By Danilo Antunes]

[Text] Antoine Blanca, personal representative of French President Francois Mitterrand and roving ambassador to Latin America, yesterday afternoon held a news conference at the diplomatic room of the Toncontin International Airport, shortly before leaving the country for a tour of Guatemala. Following are excerpts of the news conference:

[Begin recording] [Question] Will the sale of weapons to Nicaragua worsen the problems of Central America rather than help them?

[Answer] That is a matter of opinion. We sold weapons to our sister republic of Nicaragua upon request from that government, just as we have sold weapons to many other governments with whom we have good relations, as far as that goes. We sell defensive weapons for the defense of Nicaraguan territory. We understand that neither the amount nor the type of weapons we sold constitute a menace to its neighbors.

[Question] Yesterday you said that the main crisis in Central America is the Salvadoran problem, while the U.S. Government considers Nicaragua the main problem. What is your opinion?

[Answer] In my opinion, and I believe this is shared by the majority of the correspondents, the most acute problem of the area is El Salvador which, in fact, is truly an explosive trouble spot. That is why we are doing everything possible to promote dialogue that will promptly lead to direct negotiations for a democratic and moderate resolution of the conflict. This dialogue should be promoted with the assistance of the Central American nations as well as others in the area such as Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia, Panama and even the Dominican Republic.

[Question] What is your opinion of the peace initiative submitted by the Honduran Government, since you have said your government is willing to support any initiative coming from nations of this area?

[Answer] I also said these should be specific. There is a general disarmament proposal, endorsed by several nations, which I believe was made by the Honduran Government and presented by Dr Edgardo Paz Barnica. This proposal was made in the best good faith to find solutions, but has not yet met with any response. That is why I would rather not evaluate the initiative, although I insist on the need for specific solutions of the Salvadoran crisis.

[Question] During your talks with Nicaraguan Government junta members, they must have voiced their fear of an invasion of their territory since they continuously imply that an invasion could originate in Honduras. After talking with Honduran Government officials, what is your opinion? Do you still believe Honduras is truly neutral about what is occurring in other area countries?

[Answer] Nicaragua is mainly concerned about the Nueva Segovia sector near the Honduran border because of the concentration in camps of over 4,000 former Somozist guardsmen in Honduras. I want to make it clear that I never heard any mention of Hondurans, but the matter is cause for concern because they are using a neighboring territory. Here they deny the existence of camps and of such a force. I have heard both sides and I sincerely believe that there are Somozist and anti-Sandinist camps in the above-mentioned sector on the border. I could not confirm whether the figures provided to me are exact, but I do believe in the existence of these forces.

[Question] Mr Ambassador, have you not perhaps confused those Somozist camps with the Nicaraguan refugee camps in Honduras?

[Answer] Of couse not. I know there are refugee camps here, which we truly respect and help through the UN refugees commissioner. I have merely repeated to you what I was told by the Nicaraguans, and what I learned here. I have only offered my personal opinion. I do not wish to enter into a discussion of any controversial topics. I only wish the solutions for all these problems may be found soon. First, the Salvadoran problem must be resolved, as the others would solve themselves.

[Question] What is your government's view on the present Nicaraguan situation in the face of the charges made abroad about the violations of human rights in that country and about the repression imposed by the Sandinists on the Nicaraguan people?

[Answer] The leftist forces in the French Government today, which won the May 1981 elections, supported with friendliness and fervor the Sandinist revolution based on political pluralism, mixed economy and nonalignment. We are helping the Nicaraguan revolution uphold these objectives. We know that there are many problems involving this change. In fact, I had the opportunity in Nicaragua to talk freely with the Democratic Coordinating Board members; I also held a long meeting with the Higher Council of Private Enterprise, Cosep.

These organizations, which represent unions, political parties, businessmen and so forth, expressed their concerns. I also had the opportunity to read an opposition newspaper, called LA PRENSA. Our objective is to help maintain this status and to reinforce it when the area is more peaceful.

[Question] Did you observe freedom in Nicaragua?

[Answer] I have just said what I saw in Nicaragua, where I truly felt very free. I moved wherever I wanted and met with whomever I wanted. In fact, I met with Monsignor Obando y Bravo, the archbishop, with whom I talked at length. He is evidently a pastor, but he also has specific political orientations, even if he denies it. He spoke with clarity, which is one of his characteristics. [end recording]

PAZ BARNICA DISCUSSES TALKS WITH FRENCH ENVOY

PA190133 Tegucigalpa Domestic Service in Spanish 1130 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Honduran Foreign Affairs Secretary Edgardo Paz Barnica met last night with French roving Ambassador Antoine Blanca and told us the following about the meeting:

[Begin recording] [Paz Barnica] Ambassador Blanca and I talked as candidly and frankly as possible because we are under the impression that Honduras' democratic reality and the struggle for peace of President Suazo Cordova's constitutional and democratic government are sometimes distorted or misunderstood by some European and Latin American governments. Therefore, small countries like Honduras, which are facing a difficult economic situation, must step up their diplomatic efforts to project their true image abroad.

I listened to Ambassador Blanca's remarks about the situation in Central America and clearly gave him our views in that respect.

We told him that we feel that the drama in Central America, which has resulted in 100,000 deaths and 100,000 displaced persons over a period of less than 5 years, must be resolved as soon as possible with decorum, vigor, dignity and mutual respect among our countries; that we have a democratic government in Honduras and that in the same way that we respect the other Central American governments, as is the case with Nicaragua, we demand respect; that we feel that Central America's problems must be resolved within a global and regional context and not within a limited bilateral context because a global and regional solution does not necessarily preclude discussion of bilateral, internal and multilateral affairs.

We said this is a tragic situation that spreads -- events in El Salvador have a repercussion in Honduras, events in Nicaragua have a repercussion in El Salvador and Honduras and events in Guatemala have a repercussion in Costa Rica. [We also discussed] the arms traffic, the unbridled arms race in Nicaragua, the foreign advisers, violence and terrorism and said that we wish to count on the understanding of countries like France, which have exerted influence on international relations for many centuries, as well as on their cooperation and solidaristic participation in our struggle for peace and democracy. We want them to favor cooperation for development and the establishment of democratic and pluralistic governments in Central America resulting from the expression of the people's sovereign will through suffrage.

I also told him of our concern over the fact that many times the governments of developed or fairly developed countries devote priority attention to the development of the internal politics of Nicaragua -- which is showing a tendency to become radicalized, in our opinion -- and overlook the existence of democracies in countries like Honduras and Costa Rica, and that those countries are dutybound to support democratic governments that have arisen from free, popular elections, as in the case of Honduras and Costa Rica.

We talked about the situation in El Salvador, which seems to become more serious every day, and about Honduras' relations with Nicaragua, which at times have been precarious and sometimes have improved, and I said that President Suazo Cordova's Government is well disposed toward holding a lofty dialogue within a global and regional context in order to achieve stable and lasting peace in Central America.

I think that Ambassador Blanca understood our viewpoints and I hope that he will convey this message to his government so there will be no further distortions of Honduras' situation, which is expressed through the political and juridical system governing our destiny.

[Question] What was his response in this regard?

[Answer] This was an analysis and exchange of viewpoints and impressions and I found that his attitude was quite understanding. We agreed on some aspects and disagreed on others. I think that dialogue at all levels and with all countries is necessary for countries like Honduras, which are ruled democratically but are undergoing a process of consolidation of their democratric institutions. This must be done in order to pacify all sectors of Honduran society without exclusions or sectarianism of any kind, because the issue here is the defense of national and vital interests like democracy and the preservation of peace.

[Question] Did he make any specific offer in this connections?

[Answer] No. They are concerned over the situation in Central America but feel that, since they are foreign countries, they cannot intervene directly -- which pleases us because we support the principle of nonintervention. They will, however, be more than glad to exert any influence in order to resolve this situation if they can. This would be moral backing.

More on Antoine Blanca Visit

PA190145 Tegucigalpa Domestic Service in Spanish 1130 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Just before boarding the plane for Guatemala City, Antoine Blanca, French roving ambassador to Latin America, held a news conference in the diplomatic room of Toncontin International Airport. At this news conference, the French diplomat said he is sure there are anti-Sandinist camps in Honduras.

In view of this statement, Honduran Foreign Secretary Edgardo Paz Barnica has stated the following:

[Begin recording] [Paz Barnica] Nicaragua has been saying that for a long time, of course. However, Honduras' foreign policy is one of respect for the principle of non-intervention and the Honduran Government maintains a neutral position regarding the domestic affairs of other states.

The government of President Roberto Suazo Cordova has adopted measures to strengthen this neutrality policy. In Honduras there are camps for refugees from various countries: El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala. Our government receives these refugees for humanitarian reasons and with the support of international organizations and friendly governments. France is one of the countries which, through the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, gives economic contributions to help our country face the refugee problem.

[Question] The French diplomat said El Salvador is the main problem in Central America. There was also talk about the sale of arms to Nicaragua. What do you think about this?

[Answer] I think that all countries have the sovereign right to adopt whatever attitude they find suitable.

In our opinion, Nicaragua is engaged in an exaggerated arms buildup that is out of proportion. This buildup has to do not only with the acquisition of arms from foreign countries but also with the number of military men, around 100,000. Honduras has a 15,000-man army, and has received aid only for its technical improvement and training to allow it to fulfill its institutional obligations.

We don't believe the region has the military balance that Ambassador Blanca mentioned. To reach this balance, Nicaragua would have to stop its arms buildup in line with a regional and general peace program such as that proposed by Honduras.

[Question] What did you discuss with the French diplomat during your meeting?

[Answer] We discussed the Central American situation, basically. As he told you, he thinks that the El Salvador situation is the biggest problem. We believe that the El Salvador situation is very difficult and that it must be resolved by the Salvadorans themselves, for the benefit of their country and of Central America. I have been told that Ambassador Blanca has said that there is every kind of liberty in Nicaragua. In this regard I want to say that I have been in Nicaragua and there is complete news censorship. There is no pluralist democracy, in the real sense of the word. It looks like the Nicaraguan Government has a tendency to become radical. It has adopted measures aimed at destabilizing truly democratic governments such as the constitutional government presided over by Roberto Suazo Cordova, which is working for peace in Central America.

[Question] What do you think of Ambassador Antoine Blanca's visit to our country?

[Answer] It has been a very important visit because he represents a country with much international influence in today's world. I spoke with him and I think that some facts that had been distorted for him in some countries, especially in Nicaragua, were cleared up and that he will be able to have an objective view of the Honduran situation. We hope so, for the benefit of Central America, Honduras, France and our fraternal relations with the government of President Mitterrand. [end recording]

FIVE 'SANDINIST SPIES' HELD FOR ARRAIGNMENT

PA181610 Tegucigalpa Cadena Audio Video in Spanish 1145 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Five alleged Sandinist spies were presented to the media yesterday by the Department of National Investigations [DNI]. The Honduran police are keeping in their confidential files the state secrets that the Nicaraguans managed to compile in our country.

According to the police investigations, these five alleged Sandinist spies have been operating in our country, compiling official information to be turned over to the Sandinist government in Nicaragua. Here is a report by correspondent Jorge Alberto Diaz Castillo:

[Begin recording] Five alleged Sandinist spies were presented to the communications media by the DNI yesterday. The Five Nicaraguans, according to Maj Juan Blas Salazar, entered the country at El Espino around December and January and attempted to compile information on the latest military operations staged by Honduras and the United States. They also tried to get an exact idea of our government's domestic situation, to be reported to the nine commanders. The presumed Nicaraguan spies are Juan Patron (Fritz), Jose Edilberto Saavedra, Manuel Armando Orosco and (Humberto Martinez Carranza). The police are keeping in their confidential files the state secrets that were compiled in Honduras by the spies. The five arrested Nicaraguans will be handed over to the responsible courts to be arraigned in accordance with our laws. [end recording]

NICARAGUA

TORRES ALLEGES U.S. VIOLATIONS OF AIRSPACE

PA192004 Havana International in Spanish 1600 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Commander Hugo Torres, chief of the Sandinist People's Army's political section, charged in Managua that U.S. aircraft recently violated Nicaraguan airspace. He stressed that these were spy flights intended to photograph areas of Nicaragua that would later be targets for the counterrevolutionary bands that operate from Honduras.

Commander Torres also charged that a U.S. destroyer was discovered in the Gulf of Fonseca. All of this, Torres added, coincides with a noticeable increase in anti-Sandinist infiltrations of Nicaragua.

After stating that the United States has begun to turn its war machine against the Sandinist revolution, Commander Hugo Torres urged the people, especially the people;s militia, to carefully train in the tactical combat. The Sandinist leader spoke at an event in Managua initiating the upcoming training year for the Sandinist People's Army.

PAPER: RETURN SOMOZIST FROM HONDURAN EMBASSY

PA181841 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 12 Feb 83 p 5

[Excerpt] Having fun away from the Aranjuez sanitorium, where the revolution generously provided medical attention for his tuberculosis, the genocidal former Lt Ivan Jose Contreras Lopez has remained under the protection of the Honduran Embassy in Nicaragua since 17 December 1982.

The Nicaraguan Foreign Ministry has demanded that this former guardsman, who voluntarily joined repressive organizations under Somoza's regime and who worked with the Somozist security office, be turned over by the Honduran Embassy to the Nicaraguan Governemnt.

BORGE ON MISKITO VILLAGE, BORDER SITUATION

PA190023 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] The creation of a village consisting of 306 miskitos who were captured for counterrevolutionary activities was announced today by Interior Minister Tomas Borge, commander of the revolution, in the presence of a large group of U.S. intellectuals, according to an ANN dispatch. The lightly-guarded village will permit the Miskitos to live with their families, who will be brought from Nicaragua's Atlantic coast. It will have schools, health centers, and even recreational centers, Commander Tomas Borge explained. The village will be located near Tipitapa and the inhabitants will be able to engage in farming of vegetables and other agricultural products. The Miskotos will be able to engage undisturbed in their daily activities, he stated.

Regarding the situation on the northern border, Commander Tomas Borge said that in the past few days the People's Sandinist Army has dealt harsh blows to the counter-revolutionaries. As for the visit by Pope John Paul II, Commander Borge termed it positive for peace in Central America and said that for Nicaragua it is an opportune moment for the people to demonstrate their religious faith.

CHURCH SPOKESMAN VIEWS SUMMONS TO VATICAN

PA182315 Paris AFP in Spanish 2232 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Managua, 18 Feb (AFP) -- The Nicaraguan church has reacted very prudently to rumors that the pope's trip to this country might be cancelled. So far, the church has refused to either confirm or deny these rumors. "It can't be said whether or not the pope's visit to Nicaragua has been cancelled," Rev Bismarck Carballo, spokesman of the Managua Curia, said this morning.

Shortly before leaving for the Vatican, Carballo told AFP that Pope John Paul II had urgently summoned the head of the Nicaraguan church to discuss some undisclosed subject. "It is not yet known what subject will be discussed at the meeting with the pontiff," Carballo said.

Asked about the possibility that the pope's visit to Nicaragua might be cancelled, as some international dispatches quoting "church sources" have hinted, Carballo merely answred that "it cannot be said whether or not the holy father is coming."

Carballo is a member of the church mission summoned by the pontiff, which also includes Andrea Cordero di Montezemolo, the apostolic nuncio accredited in Managua; Managua Archbishop Miguel Obando; and Julian Barni, bishop of the Western diocese of Leon, where the pope is slated to visit.

Bishops Advise Pope Against Visit

PA190409 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] A DPA report from the Vatican states: The Catholic bishops of Nicaragua have advised Pope John Paul II against going to their country as part of the visit he will make to Central America beginning 2 March. This was reported today in the Vatican, 1 day after the pope met with several Nicaraguan bishops who have arrived at the Vatican.

It has also been reported that so far no change has been made to the program for the pastoral visit. The delegation of Nicaraguan bishops, headed by Managua Bishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, it has been reported, specifically told the pope about the political difficulties that make a visit to that Central American country inadvisable at the moment.

Ortega Reaffirms Interest

PA201909 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0230 GMT 20 Feb 83

["Face the People" program with guests Daniel Ortega. coordinator of the Junta of the Government of National Reconstruction of Nicaragua; and Sergio Ramirez, member of the junta, answering questions from labor representatives from four cotton farms at La Reforma production unit in Ciudad German Pomares -- live]

[Excerpts] [Ortega] Now, our companero has asked about the issue that [Ortega changes thought] -- he says that Managua Bishop Miguel Obando y Bravo is at the Vatican, talking with Vatican authorities in an effort to have the pope cancel his trip to Nicaragua.

What we must say is that we have established continuous communication with the Vatican representatives here in Nicaragua and we have been working on the matter of the pope's trip to Central America, particularly Nicaragua, in March. We continue to work on this. Certain places are being prepared to receive the pope.

Representatives of the revolutionary government and of the FSLN, as well as representatives of the various religions, are involved in this. We can say that most representatives of the various faiths have a positive attitude. If someone is trying to keep the pope from coming to Nicaragua, this is not by our choice. We believe that the Nicaraguan people would like the pope to visit Nicaragua. We know that there are current difficulties in the Central American region. We know that Nicaragua is subject to attack from the United States and we all know of the continuous fighting that is underway i the border area against Somozist guardsmen armed by the United States. Under these circumstances, it only makes sense that a papal visit would benefit the Central American region and Nicaragua, for it will contribute to the struggle for peace.

As I have said, under those circumstances, the Nicaraguan people, and the revolutionary government naturally, have invited the pope to visit Nicaragua, for we believe that the pope's visit will contribute to this struggle for peace.

Of course, the problem cannot be solved in this manner, because the problem is related to the U.S. Government's attitude. We have no illusions that the pope's visit will provide a solution to the problem, because that is not the case, but the pope would help to make it possible for this problem to be resolved in a different way, through dialogue, discussion and political solution, rather than by aggression.

Bishops Advise Pope Against Visit

PA202039 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1745 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Managua, 19 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- The Managua bishops office today promptly denied international press dispatches claiming that Managua bishop Msgr Miguel Obando y Bravo had "advised the pope against coming to Nicaragua."

Father Bismarck Carbal[illegible] the bishopric's secretary of press and information, said that "the dispatch by a [illegible]ews agency (not ACAN-EFE) about the pope's meeting with the Nicaraguan bishops is false, because the Nicaraguan delegation arrived in Rome today, 19 February, at 0600 Managua time (1200 GMT)."

He said: "It is surprising that false and malicious reports are spread by media that have always accused the international news agencies of manipulating the news.

He concluded: "We charge that the continuous repetition of these reports is part of a campaign to blemish the image of the Nicaraguan clergy and to divide the church."

Archibishop Obando y Bravo, accompanied by Msgr Julian Barni, bishop of Leon; and Msgr Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezolo, papal nuncio in Managua, left Saturday for Rome as requested by Pope John Paul II.

The pope's visit to Nicaragua is scheduled for Friday, 4 March. Meanwhile, workers of the Managua Junta of National Reconstruction are working overtime to remodel the stand at the "19 July" plaza where the pope will hold mass on 4 March.

Preparations for Pope's Visit

PA212205 Havana International Service in Spanish 1600 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] The Mexican newspaper UNO MAS UNO points out that in contrast to the attitude of the Salvadorean regime, the Sandinist government is using all its resources to prepare adequately for the arrival of Pope John Paul II in Nicaragua. The paper says that while the Salvadorean regime refuses to agree on a cease-fire with the insurgent organizations during the pope's visit, the Sandinist junta in Nicaragua is coordinating a welcome ceremony for John Paul II that is worthy of a chief of state. The paper adds that the Nicaraguan Catholic hierarchy, specifically Archbishop Miguel Obando y Bravo, seems intent on placing obstacles in the road of a visit that will unavoidably seek peaceful goals.

Meanwhile, Nicaraguan Government Junta Coordinator Daniel Ortega has warned that if Pope John Paul II cancels his visit to Nicaragua, those who advised him to do this will be held responsible. The Nicaraguan people continue waiting and preparing for the high potiff's visit; if someone is scheming so that the pope will not come, this is not the Nicaraguan Government's will, Ortega said. He was referring to news that Archbishop Obando y Bravo had made this suggestion to John Paul II last Saturday at the Vatican.

BORGE REPORTS 'HARSH BLOWS' TO ANTI-SANDINISTS

PA190401 Panama City ACAN in Spanish 1603 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Managua, 18 Feb (ACAN-EFE) -- The Nicaraguan Army has dealt "new and harsh blows" to anti-Sandinist groups that have once again penetrated into Nicaragua from Honduras, said Interior Minister Commander Tomas Borge.

Speaking to a group of local and foreign newsmen at the "Zona Franca" panel center north of Managua, Borge said that in the next few hours the government will make public a report on the results of new fighting on the northern border.

"These are crushing military blows dealt against the counterrevolutionaries, frustrating their plans. However, it does not mean that the groups have disappeared," explained the minister.

He said that after the Big Pine joint military maneuvers, held between the United States and Honduras, the Honduran Army has been left with more weapons and in a better combat capacity. Nevertheless, Borge said that what the United States has not achieved, and will never achieve, is "to intimidate the Sandinists."

We added that the balance of military forces on the Honduran-Nicaraguan border "favors the Sandinist Peoples Army" and the Nicaraguan revolution.

Borge said that the Sandinist revolution feels "constantly threatened by the aggression of the counterrevolution, which is manipulated from the center of imperialism, but the Sandinist revolution is not in danger of dying."

Referring to domestic political forces, the interior minister said that "we have absolute trust in our own forces to deal with the attacks, but the international solidarity of peoples is a necessary complement in the case of a difficult situation in a weak country that is in the process of change."

Borge asked all the world's peoples for "better understanding of our problems and to contribute to peace in central America." He said that "the pope's visit (slated for 4 March) will objectively contribute to the peace that we so desire."

Regarding the Salvadoran conflict, Borge explained that the "success after success" being achieved by the Salvadoran revolutionary forces "has been a cause for concern by those who do not want a revolution there." He pointed out that as a result of the guerrillas' struggle in El Salvador, there is the possibility of a move "to force us to negotiate under certain conditions," and that "counterrevolutionary activity will increase."

Communique on Clashes

PA191615 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Communique No 5 issued by the Nicaraguan Defense Ministry on 18 February 1983 -- read by announcer]

[Text] The Nicaraguan Defense Ministry reports that counterrevolutionary units stationed in Honduras have been raiding the northern areas of our country since early February. The following clashes have been reported:

1. Between 3 and 9 February 1983, Sandinist Peoples Army [EPS] troops clashed with the counterrevolutionaries in the border area of Wamblan, on the Coco River, in Jinotega Department, inflicting four dead and several wounded on the enemy. The following material was recovered: 3 AKA Chinese rifles, 2 FAL rifles, handgrenades, M-60 machinegun belts, explosives and army backpacks.

2. Between 9 and 19 February in (Chinali), Nueva Segovia Department, EPS troops clashed with counterrevolutionary units entering from Honduran territory. To date the enemy has suffered 55 dead, wounded and prisoners, and the following material has been recovered: 12 Chinese AKA rifles, 8 FAL rifles, 2 M-79 grenade launchers, 2 60-mm mortars, 4 Chinese-made RPG-7 rocket launchers, 21,000 rounds of ammunition, 18 RPG-7 grenades, 19 detonators and various kinds of grenades, military equipment and documents.

3. During these activities, 8 EPS members were killed and 11 were wounded while heroically defending the sovereignty of the fatherland.

[Dated] Managua, 18 February 1983 [Signed] Public and Foreign Relations Office, Defense Ministry Free fatherland or death.

Amnesty Program Announced

PA191931 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Communique issued by the Nicaraguan Interior Ministry on 19 February 1983 -- read by announcer]

[Text] The Interior Ministry wishes to inform the people of Nicaragua that citizens Jose Antonio Herrera Vilchez, Manuel de Jesus Flores Calero, Reinaldo Rayo Hernandez, Jose Ines Rayo Hernandez, Rosendo Adrian Diaz Espinoza and Sergio Munoz Talavera, members of counterrevolutionary detachments who decided to desert and return home or to surrender to the authorities, will be released immediately so that they may join their families and return to work.

Because some members of the counterrevolutionary units are humble people who were forcefully recruited in Honduras or here in our country or were confused by propaganda broadcast by enemy radio stations or disseminated by religious sects, the Interior Ministry has decided that all members of counterrevolutionary units who voluntarily present themselves before representatives of the Sandinist Peoples Army or the Interior Ministry with all of their military equipment will be released as soon as the necessary investigations are completed.

This policy will not include members of counterrevolutionary units who were members of the Somozist National Guard or those who have been involved in criminal actions.

Managua, Nicaragua, 19 February 1983 year of the struggle for peace and sovereignty

[Signed] Public and Foreign Relations Office, Interior Minstry

COORDINATING BOARD TOUR TERMED 'FAILURE'

PA190210 Managua BARRICADA in Spanish 12 Feb 83 p 1

[Text] Panama (special for BARRICADA) -- After Panamanian President Ricardo de la Espriella and other government officials refused to meet with them in private, the Nicaraguan Democratic Coordinating Board tour was deemed a "political failure" here.

Adan Fletes, the group's spokesman, admitted at a small news conference that the group's requests had not met with a positive response from the Panamanian Government.

Fletes merely limited himself to thanking the representatives of several Panamanian opposition parties, with whom they managed to meet, for their "solidarity." Furthermore, rumors circulated in Panamanian political circles that the coordinating board members had taken advantage of their trip to meet with several Nicaraguan counterrevolutionaries who live abroad. Meanwhile, the media, even that of the right, said little about their activities.

Nor were the board members able to meet with Colombian President Belisario Betancur. There was not the slightest information in Costa Rica on the group's alleged talks with President Monge.

In Managua, meanwhile, the statement to LA PRENSA by Erick Ramirez, one of the members of the group, was interpreted as confirmation of the failure of the Coordinating Board's tour, for although he called the tour a "democratic victory," Ramirez avoided all comments on the group's alleged talks with the Latin American presidents.

RUIZ MEETS WITH CEMA OFFICIAL IN MOSCOW

PA181614 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Commander of the Revolution Henry Ruiz is visiting the Soviet Union. The development of cooperation between Nicaragua and CEMA was discussed yesterday during Commander Henry Ruiz meeting with CEMA Secretary Nikolai Fadeyev in the socialist economic integration organization's Moscow headquarters.

DEPUTY DEFENSE MINISTER VISITS PDRY 17 FEB

PA181619 Managua Radio Sandino in Spanish 1830 GMT 17 Feb 83

[Text] Aden Yemen -- A Nicaraguan delegation led by Deputy Defense Minister Leopoldo Rivas arrived in the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen [PDRY] yesterday on an official visit. After being welcomed by Abu Bakr 'Abd ar-Razzaq, Yemen Socialist Party Politburo member, the delegation met with Chairman 'Ali Nasir Muhammad.

The PDRY leader stressed his complete support for the struggle of the Nicaraguan people, under the FSLN's leadership, to guarantee their political and economic independence and to safeguard their national sovereignty.

DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH YAR ESTABLISHED 20 FEB

PA211710 Managua Radio Sandino Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] In line with the foreign policy implemented by the Sandinist people's revolution, a joint communique was signed yesterday in Yemen Arab Republic between that nation and Nicaragua, establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The document was signed by Yemeni Foreign Minister 'Ali Lufti ath-Thawr and Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Miguel d'Escoto.

In the communique, the two foreign ministers expressed their identification with the Nonaligned Movement and with the Arab peoples' struggle to recover the territories occupied by the Israeli forces. They also condemned Israel's ties with certain Latin American countries and foreign interference in Central America.

CARDENAL RETURNS FROM VISIT TO EUROPE

PA181833 Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] The world crisis for Latin America, especially Nicarauga, has a name: Ronald Reagan. This was stated by Culture Minister Ernesto Cardenal on his arrival today from France, where he attended a meeting of intellectuals. Cardenal explained that many intellectuals expressed interest in familiarizing themselves with our Sandinist revolutionary process. He said that he had the opportunity to go to the Sorbonne University in Paris, where he explained the Sandinist revolution's cultural achievements, especially at the popular level.

BRIEFS

NEW DEPUTY HEALTH MINISTER -- The government junta has appointed Carlos Bojorge Mendoza as the new deputy health minister. He was working in the Nicaraugan Social Security Institute. [Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 17 Feb 83 PA]

AUSTRIAN WHEAT -- The International Reconstruction Fund has announced the arrival of 9,000 metric tons of wheat, donated as an act of solidarity by the Government of Austria. The donation is being unloaded at the Port of Corinto. [Managua Domestic Service in Spanish 0300 GMT 8 Feb 83 PA]

MALMIERCA, RODRIGUEZ PRAISE FOREIGN SERVICE

FL181335 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1145 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] The Foreign Ministry [Minrex] has held its annual plenary session at the FAR's Universal Hall. The plenum was chaired by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez, member of the party's Politburo and vice president of the Councils of State and Ministers; Jesus Montane, alternate member of the Politburo; and Isidoro Malmierca, member of the Central Committee and foreign minister.

The annual report submitted by Malmierca outlines the Foreign Ministry's work during 1982, which he termed positive. He indicated that a great effort had been made in the field of foreign currency savings on the part of ministry personnel as well as in the training of cadres and by our missions abroad. Malmierca stressed that 1983 has begun with a good record and, during the year, the ministry's workers will work hard to strengthen Cuba's bilateral and multilateral relations with fraternal countries.

Cuba's foreign minister referred to the international situation, which he said has been marked by the threats and aggressive actions of the reactionary Reagan Administration. He stressed that our people's resolute will of defending the fatherland with the arms will stop all enemies from making any attempts [of aggression], even though it is necessary to continue to be prepared against any imperialist adventure.

Malmierca noted the success of the meeting of the Nonaligned Movement Coordinating Bureau held in Managua, Nicaragua, and valued highly Cuba's work at the head of the movement during this period of time, scheduled to end when the New Delhi's summit takes place. He called on the Foreign Ministry's workers to fulfill the appeal made by the party's sixth plenum urging all Cubans to be more exigent to celebrate in a worthy manner the 30th Moncada assault anniversary and the 25th anniversary of the revolution's triumph.

During the Minrex annual plenum, the winner of the ministry's emulation were announced and 10, 15 and 20-year service certificates were presented to comrades in the foreign service.

The closing remarks were made by Carlos Rafael Rodriguez. [Begin Rodriguez recording] Exigency means better quality and greater quantity of work. In recent years and, particularly, in 1982, the ministry has demonstrated that it is possible to perform work equal to the level of our international foreign policy with the intellectual resources we have, that is to fulfill the functions assigned to us in the exercise of international policy with an increasingly better quality. [end recording]

ESPIN PLEDGES FMC SUPPORT TO FIDEL CASTRO

FL191553 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Vilma Espin, alternate member of the Politburo and president of the Federation of Cuban Women [FMC], has reiterated to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro, from heroic Santiago de Cuba and on behalf of the Cuban women, that they will always be willing to fulfill any task and ready to fight the enemy. The women's leader made the closing remarks at a mass rally of the Santiago de Cuba FMC during which the women ratified their commitments in honor of the 30th anniversary of the assault on the Moncada barracks and in response to the sixth party Central Committee plenum resolution. Vilma stated that the Cuban women, 35.2 percent of the country's work force, have been consistent as a result of the confidence placed in them by Fidel, and that the tasks assigned to them on 23 August 1960 are being fulfilled with FMC determination, fervor and awareness.

MONTANE MEETS WITH PLO ENVOY IN HAVANA

FL191524 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1200 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] Jesus Montane Oropesa, alternate member of the Politburo, member of the Secretariat and chief of the Central Committee Foreign Relations General Department, has met with (Ahmed Romeh), a special envoy of Yasir 'Arafat, chairman of the PLO Executive Committee. (Romeh) delivered to Montane a fraternal message from the top PLO leader to Commander in Chief Fidel Castro. The message conveys 'Arafat's greetings and high esteem for the firm stand of support maintained by the Cuban revolution, its leadership and, in particular, by President Fidel Castro for the just and legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people against imperialism and Zionism. During the meeting Montane expressed gratitude for the message and repeated the will of our people, party and government in support of the just Palestinian cause and its legitimate and sole representative, the PLO.

LEZCANO COMMENTS ON PLO MEETING, DEPARTS ALGIERS

FL212307 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2134 GMT 21 Feb 83

[Text] After attending the 16th Palestinian National Council meeting, Jorge Lezcano, vice president of Cuba's National Assembly of the People's Government and member of Cuba's Communist Party Central Committee, has departed Algeria. Asked about his impressions of the meeting, which was attended by 384 delegates from all parts of the world, the chief of the Cuban delegation said it represents another step forward in strengthening the Palestinian revolution. He added that the meeting of the Palestinian parliament-in-exile constitutes an exemplary demonstration of the democracy existing in that movement of national liberation. Lezcano stressed that all predictions of the enemy with respect to an alleged division in the PLO were proved wrong. The PLO will come out stronger and with greater prestige when the National Council meetings ends in Algeria and its final resolutions are announced, Lezcano stated. He added that the Cuban revolution feels much closer to Palestine after the PLO's heroic resistance to the Israeli aggression in Beirut, Lebanon.

During his stay in the Algerian capital, Lezcano was received by PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat, with whom he exchanged views in a friendly and fraternal atmosphere. The meeting, which took place a few hours after his arrival in Algeria, demonstrates the PLO leader's desire to strengthen ties between Cuban and Palestinian revolutionaries and their respective national assemblies.

TRADE WITH BULGARIA TO INCREASE 18 PERCENT

FL182250 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 2230 GMT 18 Feb 83

[Text] Ricardo Cabrizas, minister of foreign trade of the Republic of Cuba, has received Marin Marinov, deputy minister of foreign trade of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, who heads his country's trade delegation to the 1983 trade talks. During their meeting, the two ministers examined the positive results of the development of trade relations between the two countries. Cuban-Bulgarian trade for 1983 will be inreased to approximately R315 million, or 18 percent better than in 1982. The protocol forecasted an increase in Cuban deliveries of sugar, citrus products and other goods to the People's Republic of Bulgaria.

HUMBERTO PEREZ ARRIVES IN GDR ON OFFICIAL VISIT

FL191634 Havana Domestic Service in Spanish 1518 GMT 19 Feb 83

[Text] The president of Cuba's Central Planning Board and alternate member of Cuba's Communist Party Politburo, Humberto Perez Gonzalez, arrived today in the capital of the GDR on an official working visit.

COMMENTARY DISCUSSES KILLINGS IN GUATEMALA

PA182237 Havana International Service in Spanish 2310 GMT 17 Feb 83

["Our America" commentary]

[Text] There is currently no corner of Guatemala in which Efrain Rios Montt's regime has not spread its policy of death and extermination. The areas hardest hit by government repression are the Guatemalan highlands, particularly in El Quiche, Chimaltenango, and Huehuetenango Departments, where the dictatorship almost daily kills hundreds of defenseless civilians.

Rios Montt is not the first to show his criminal nature there. His predecessors also vented their cruelty against the people in those regions of Guatemala. First a policy was implemented there to selectively eliminate leaders and activists of peasant organizations, cooperatives and cultural, religious and sports organizations. Each citizen noteworthy for his social activities became part of the innumerable blacklists prepared by the high military commands. The Army went from threats to the criminal action of killing, in which it had the cooperation of the paramilitary bands. Some of those selected by the repressive corps managed to escape; others, the majority, were murdered.

As the revolutionary war of the people has increased, the dictatorship has perfected its methods of mass extermination. This is how for almost 2 years now dozens of villages, hamlets and townships are attacked almost without interruption while their defenseless inhabitants are tortured and murdered by the cruelest methods ever recorded in the history of America. The human hunt unleashed by the Guatemalan Army several years ago caused an immense majority of men and youths to leave their families to avoid being killed. The rural communities were thus virtually inhabitated only by women, old men and children.

However, this did not stop the dictatorship, which also vented its fury on them, not respecting sex or age. Thousands of them were literally dismembered by the military troops. This practice is used frequently by the Kaibiles, the dictatorship's elite troops, who are responsible for the largest killings committed in Guatemala.

Therefore, to speak of human rights and without referring to Guatemala is to incur criminal complicity. Today there are virtually no inhabited villages in that Central American nation. The inhabitants have fled as internal refugees to the mountains and hills to avoid Army persecution. The few who dare to live in communities know that their lives are seriously endangered although they have no connection with the guerrilla forces.

Such atrocities are committed by the Guatemalan Army with impunity. The dictatorship's spokesmen and officials claim they are committed by insurgents. Such are the arguments wielded by the oligarchic and military groups that have wielded power since February 1971 when the Army massacred 72 peasants in the region of Sacala in Chimaltenango Department. Similar killings have been committed since against dozens of townships in El Quiche, Solola, Las Verapaces and Huehuetenango. Insecurity has spread throughout Guatemala. Hundreds of peasants were taken out of trucks and buses in the countryside and nothing was ever known of them. Hence, the war of liberation waged today by the Guatemalan national revolutionary unity has the support of the majority of the people, who are ready to make whatever sacrifices are necessary to overthrow the dictatorship and install a democratic, popular government in that small country of our America.

COMMENTARY ALLEGES PRC EFFORTS AGAINST NONALIGNED

PA181601 Havana International Service in Spanish 0000 GMT 17 Feb 83

["World Events" commentary, read by Angel Hernandez]

[Text] Beijing is now resorting to old criticisms of Cuba, specifically of Cuba's actions at the last nonaligned summit, held here more than 3 years ago. This is certainly not because there is a unique concept of time in China. An article that was published on Sunday by the newspaper RENMIN RIBAO, the ruling Chinese party's official newspaper, might seem to be an untimely reaction, but in truth, it is not simply that patience prevails in Peking's conduct. Rather, although the newspaper refers to the position taken at the Havana summit on the Kampuchea issue, its objective is to sabotage the upcoming conference of heads of state and government in New Delhi in March.

In order to interpret what China means with RENMIN RIBAO's statement that Cuba, abusing its authority as president of the Nonaligned Movement, manipulated the issue of Kampuchea's representation, one must bear in mind the special meaning that Beijing attaches to principles. A recent example is the warm welcome given to U.S. Secretary of State George Shultz when he visited China less than 3 weeks ago. From banquet to banquet, from meeting to meeting, the Chinese and North Americans set aside the killing of thousands of Kampucheans by the Pol Pot and Ieng Sary regime, perpetrated with the support of Beijing, in order to continue to promote an alliance between those figures and roving former monarch Norodom Sihanouk. Shultz had time to talk with the former [word indistinct] monarch at the Chinese authorities' palace and to reiterate U.S. support, in an open challenge to the New Delhi government, which has said it will not invite Sihanouk to the summit. The current anti-Cuban campaign was obviously not absent on that occasion.

Only 48 hours after Shultz traveled from Peking to Seoul RENMIN RIBAO leveled its accusations against Cuba and the following day, the XINHUA news agency added another ingredient, which was present in nearly all of Shultz' speeches in Beijing: the Soviet threat.

The Chinese unquestionably conduct U.S.-style publicity campaigns, although with fewer resources and less mastery of the propaganda techniques involved. Just as Washington resorts to the alleged Soviet threat to intervene anywhere in the world where it feels its interests are threatened, Beijing uses the same argument to try to sever the unity of the nonaligned. A few weeks ago, it was revealed that a destabilization maneuver conducted by the U.S. CIA was being implemented against Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. It was later said that the Indian Government was being pressured to admit former Kampuchean monarch Norodom Sihanouk to the seventh summit in New Delhi. Therefore, the comments of RENMIN RIBAO and XINHUA can only be seen as a part of the actions currently underway against the Nonaligned Movement, which represents a good part of the world's peoples, in a not especially new attempt to cause the March summit meeting to fail.